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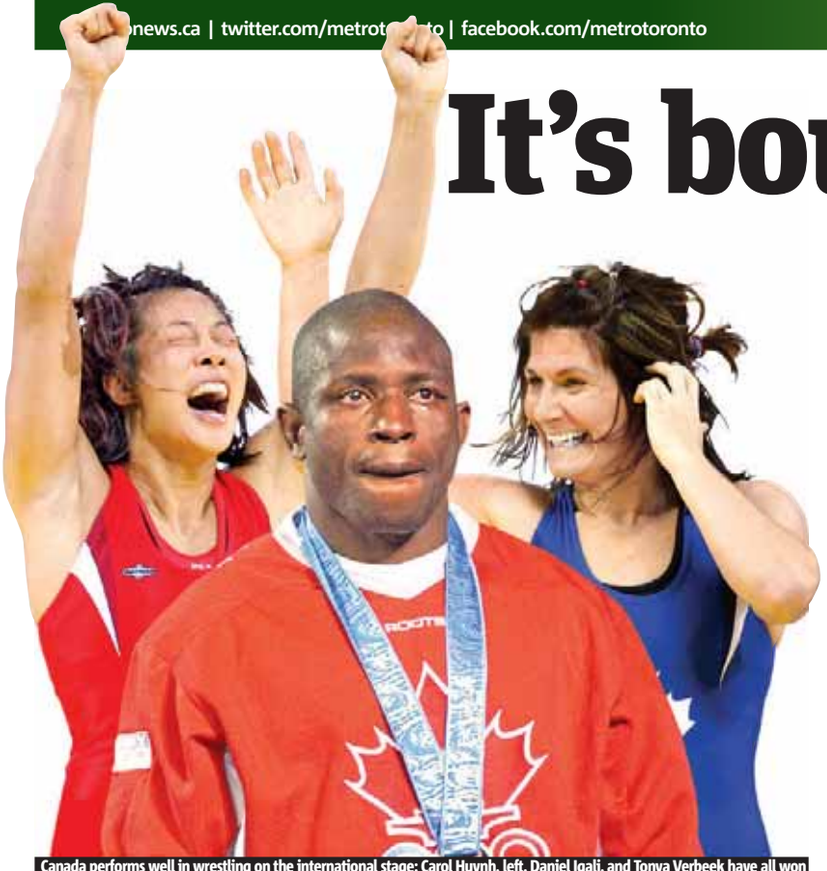

Canada performs well in wrestling on the international stage: Carol Huynh, left, Daniel Igali, and Tonya Verbeek have all won Olympic medals. PHOTOS: PAUL CHIASSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS, DAVID HENFELDER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS; ILLUSTRATION: DAVID VAN DYKE/METRO

Wrestlers have Olympic fight on their hands.

'We're combative people,' Wrestling Canada president says

JESSICA SMITH
jessica.smith@metronews.ca

The international wrestling community is gearing up for a fight to keep the sport in the Olympics, launching a lobbying campaign no one knew was needed until Tuesday's surprise decision by the International Olympic Committee.

"We didn't even know we were on the chopping block," said Wrestling Canada president Don Ryan.

Canada has performed well in wrestling, especially since women's wrestling became an Olympic sport in 2004. Daniel Igali won gold in 2000, as did Carol Huynh in 2008. (She also won bronze in 2012.) Tonya Verbeek won silver in 2004 and bronze in 2008 and 2012.

The IOC executive board announced it is recommending freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestling be dropped from the Olympic program, a decision that is set to be ratified in May.

"We're wrestling. We're combative people," Ryan said. "We're going to pull our sleeves up and get to work on saving our sport for 2020."

If the decision is ratified, wrestling will join seven other sports — baseball/softball, karate, roller sports, sport climbing, squash, wakeboarding and wushu — to lobby for inclusion in the 2020 games.

Huynh, who won gold in Beijing, expressed her shock over Twitter: "Can't believe IOC is cutting wrestling! Huge blow to our sport all over the world."

The sport's governing body, the International Federation of Associated Wrestling Styles (FILA), was already scheduled to hold its biannual meeting in Phuket, Thailand, this weekend. It will now focus on the Olympic problem, Ryan said.

After the 2000 Olympics, FILA changed some rules in an effort to make the sport more exciting. Rounds were shortened and scoring was simplified. At the upcoming meeting, FILA was to discuss encouraging "more high-action moves" and making scoring easier to understand, said Ryan.

Modern pentathlon and taekwondo were seen as more likely to be cut from the Olympics than wrestling. Asked about the lobbying efforts, sponsorships, power and money involved in those sports, Ryan said he hopes the IOC's decisions aren't made on that basis.

While the IOC has not given a concrete reason for the decision, it claims it's based on a report that analyzes numerous factors, including television ratings, ticket sales, anti-doping policy and global participation, as well as popularity.

"This is a process of renewing and renovating the program for the Olympics," IOC spokesman Mark Adams said. "In the view of the executive board, this was the best program for the Olympic Games in 2020. It's not a case of what's wrong with wrestling, it is what's right with the 25 core sports."

Ryan said wrestling's lobbying consists of presenting values of the sport, which includes its global representation from more than 180 countries, how it has sold out tickets to events in all of the Olympics since 1996 and that it is affordable.

WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

Gaining popularity

"With MMA, a lot of the top athletes, including Georges St. Pierre, have wrestling as a base, and a lot more kids are going out to get that wrestling background now.

Wrestling Canada president Don Ryan

MORE COVERAGE, PAGE 37

Blast! I fell for a speaker scam!

Muhammed Zakir's "subwoofer" feels heavy and the brand sounds like it might be Swedish so ... it's good quality, right? Wrong PAGE 4

Did ex-cop go up in flames?

America's most-wanted man is believed to have been in a cabin when it engulfed in flames during a standoff PAGE 14

Bautista boasts of Jays' ability

"This is the best team I've been on in my career," the home-run king says, and he thinks they can go all the way PAGE 36

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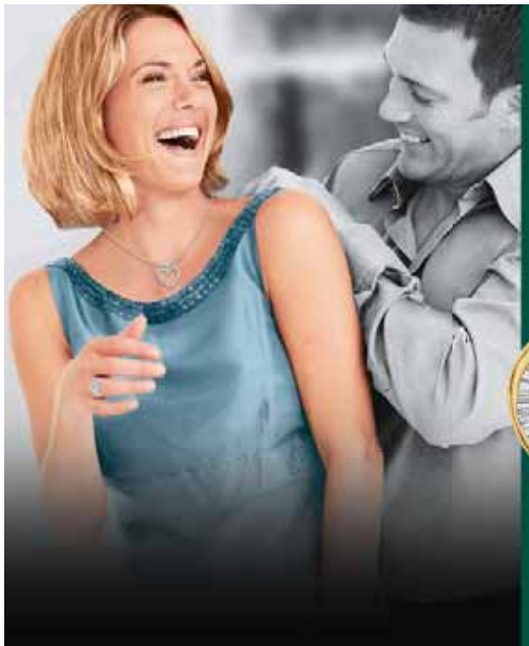

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Sgt. Ryan Russell trial

Cop killer worried about God's love

In the days before he stole a snowplow and killed Toronto police Sgt. Ryan Russell, Richard Kachkar asked a fellow homeless-shelter resident if God would still love him if he did something bad.

"He said if he did something wrong or hurtful that would God still love him or would he have to leave God," Kathleen Male told Kachkar's first-degree murder trial Tuesday.

"I said, 'No, God loves everyone,'" Male told an Ontario Superior Court jury.

Kachkar and Male both lived in the 40-bed Southridge homeless shelter in St. Catharines in late 2010 and early January 2011, court heard. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Zoning bylaw

Council evades issue of rooming houses

In the wake of a recent raid on an illegal rooming house in Scarborough, housing advocates are expressing outrage over a new city-wide zoning bylaw that aims to preserve the status quo.

Currently, only Etobicoke and the old cities of Toronto and York allow and regulate rooming houses under the patchwork of pre-amalgamation rules.

"Not only is it a missed opportunity, it's a shameful blot on the record of a number of politicians," said Michael Shapcott, director of housing and innovation for the Wellesley Institute. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Michael Shapcott
VINCE TALOTTA/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

These dogs will have their day

The World Stage North American premiere of an art show called Dachshund UN is set for Feb. 28. Each dachshund represents a different "country" and a lot of barking between Russia, China and the U.S. delegates is expected. About 36 dachshunds — part of a group of 117 — mostly recruited from the GTA will be on stage during the free shows in the Enwave theatre on Queens Quay, running March 3. Go to metronews.ca for full story. CONTRIBUTED

Growing pains for T.O. teens 'shocking'

Anxiety over future. TDSB survey finds high degree of stress, loneliness and depression in grade 7-12 students

The overwhelming worry and anxiety that kids as young as 12 are suffering from is not only a "wake-up call" but a call to action, said Canada's largest school board in releasing the results of a student survey showing troubling numbers of Toronto tweens and teens are stressed out about their futures, lacking confidence and feeling down.

Believed to be the largest such census in the country with 103,000 participants from grades 7 to 12, it is the first time the Toronto District School Board has asked students questions about their emotional well-being.

And what it found was not only groundbreaking but shocking, said research co-ordinator Maria Yau.

"A majority of students are telling us they are nervous or anxious all the time," she said. "These are new items to us, and quite shocking.... It reflects what youth in our urban centres are thinking about" and has broader implications for other school boards and communities.

"This is a wake-up call," she said. "These are areas we need to pay attention to."

The 2011 survey offers a rare and sometimes painful glimpse into the lives of Toronto's youth, asking them everything from how they feel about themselves, their school and teachers to how often they eat breakfast and lunch.

It gives the board a chance to pinpoint areas of concern and target programs. The first student census, in 2006, led to improvements in school safety and boosted nutrition programs after it was revealed how few students were eating breakfast and lunch daily.

All showed significant improvements in the 2011 survey, said Donna Quan, the board's director of education.

While the board does have a number of programs to address children's mental and emotional health, the "voices of 103,000 students ... will be driving and shaping our mental-health strategy," which will be unveiled in the coming months, she added. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Findings

- The survey found that in grades 7 and 8, almost 60 per cent of students worry about their future all of the time or sometimes; in high school, it grows to almost three-quarters.
- In the four-page student survey, teens report feeling "reasonably happy," but when asked more specific questions, the stressors begins to show: they feel tired, have trouble concentrating or making decisions, and are losing sleep because of it.

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Anatomy of a back-of-van speaker scam

Bargain sound system rings hollow. Parking lot deal a real steal — for the sellers

JESSICA SMITH
jessica.smith@metronews.ca

A Metro reporter, left, examines a speaker system being to shown to her by a man selling them from a van on Church Street near Charles Avenue on Monday. METRO

Inside Muhammed Zakir's rölkolsen "subwoofer" there is a large hunk of dense rubbery material that serves no purpose other than to give the speaker weight — weight that's otherwise lacking because some of the technology you would expect to find in a surround-sound system is missing.

Quoted

"They were saying they're delivery guys and they were delivering this for their boss and manager. But the company had dispatched one extra and they want to get rid of it right now because, if they take it back, it will be returned and be wasted, and they want to make some money off of this one extra."
Muhammed Zakir

The particleboard-and-plastic speakers have a manufacturer's suggested retail price of $2,799, which both the price tag and website where they are listed confirm.

The owner of Toronto's Moog Audio pegs the rölkolsen R-10's value at $20 to $30.

"These are speakers you would traditionally find in an alarm clock," said Francis Delage, while looking over the system that Zakir brought to his store on Monday. After a closer look, he said he'd seen alarm clocks and PA systems that were higher quality.

The box and photo containing the rölkolsen speakers sold to Muhammed Zakir. JESSICA SMITH/METRO

Delage doesn't sell rölkolsen, has never heard of the brand and believes they're not available in stores.

Zakir bought his speakers from "some guys" in a Walmart parking lot in Vaughan for $100, in what appears to be what some call the classic white-van speaker scam.

It works pretty much the same way every time. High-pressure salesmen open the back of their van with a sales pitch and a story about unloading supposedly high-end speakers for a bargain because of some unusual circumstances.

"They were saying they're delivery guys and they were delivering this for their boss and manager," Zakir said. "But the company had dispatched one extra and they want to get rid of it right now because, if they take it back, it will be returned and be wasted, and they want to make some money off of this one extra."

The box containing the speakers "looked legitimate" he said.

Alongside the sky-high manufacturer's suggested retail price tag there are several official-looking decals on the box. One says, "Quality tested by the Council of Electronic Engineers" — a group that has little to no reputation or does not exist. Another is the Alfa Romeo logo with the words "Audio Master" where "Alfa Romeo" would normally be.

It didn't take Zakir long to realize his mistake when he got home and looked closely at the speakers. So he looked up the brand name on the Internet.

"I Google it and I knew — oh, my god," he said.

There are warnings online from people across Canada and in other countries about rölkolsen and white-van speaker scams. Some note that the name rölkolsen reminds them of reputable speaker brands Polk Audio and Bang & Olufsen.

Zakir took his speakers to Moog Audio on Queen Street West to find out exactly what was wrong with them.

Delage tested the system and looked inside.

The "subwoofer" isn't actually a subwoofer, because there is no crossover network to separate out the bass, so the sub plays all frequencies, Delage said.

The other four speakers appear to have a small tweeter for high frequencies, but when Delage pulled off the cover he revealed only a cone-shaped piece of hard plastic.

The "home theatre" also did not come with an amplifier to drive the speakers, and Delage noted that one would have to be purchased.

Instead of buying an amplifier, an obviously disappointed Zakir opted to go home and leave the surround-sound system behind.

When does exaggeration become deception?

'Fishy' speaker sales don't necessarily break the law

York Regional Police Det. Sgt. Mike Elliott of the major-fraud section said the back-of-a-van speaker sale "problem" has been going on for decades, with some variations.

"I say 'problem,' as opposed to 'scam'," he explained. "In this case, you are buying speakers, they just are not what you think they are."

There is a line where the "problem" becomes an illegal scam, but it isn't obvious, he said. "If they say they're selling speakers and they work, well, then, they're selling speakers. It depends — when does exaggeration become deception?"

Elliott said it's a typical case of "buyer beware."

"I think the human mind is left to imagine, 'Oh, here's a deal,' and sometimes people get caught up in that without exercising caution," he said. "You get the thing home, it comes out of the box and you plug it in and it falls apart or whatever, and it's usually too late to find out who these people are or how to give it back."

JESSICA SMITH/METRO

Website looks good — on the surface

At first blush, the website for rölkolsen Home Theatre Solutions looks professional.

"For 22 years, rölkolsen has been among the best in the professional PA category," it says.

When you Google "rölkolsen," the company website shows up first, before hits on other websites devoted to exposing consumer scams.

However, the website has information that raises red flags. It has a section full of tech news stories and product reviews lifted from other sites, including hometheater.com and Engadget, where the phrase "rölkolsen R-10" is substituted in place of other brand names and certain key words.

As a result, Google is filled with search results that seem to associate rölkolsen with well-known brands.

Despite announcing that the company takes pride in its customer service, the only way to contact rölkolsen is by email. An email from Metro asking for an interview for this story went unanswered.

JESSICA SMITH/METRO

Buying a rölkolsen

- In effort to learn more about rölkolsen, Metro contacted someone who was selling an R-10 surround-sound system on Craigslist.
- A man named Trevor said he'd received the system as a gift from his parents for Christmas, but already had a surround-sound system, so he didn't need it.
- He said the system was worth $1,000, but he was selling it for $200 because it was taking up room in his basement.
- When asked if he knew the company was associated with speaker scams, he said he had no idea.
- "Well, this is mine, I bought this. I mean my parents gave it to me. If they were taken, I don't know," he said. "I think they paid probably around $1,000 for it."

Ready to set hearts aflutter

Toronto-born crooner Matt Dusk launched his new album, My Funny Valentine, on Tuesday at the Waterfall Stage in First Canadian Place. On Valentine's Day, the popular jazz stylist will perform at Yonge-Dundas Square in a benefit for the Ted Rogers Centre of Excellence in Heart Function. Fans can buy a heart to support the initiative at heartinthecity.ca. CONTRIBUTED/SANDLER/CENTRAL IMAGE AGENCY

Accused dog strangler jailed

Rescue gone bad.
Convicted of animal cruelty, woman still awaits trial on charges she hanged Shar-Pei

While still in pre-trial custody on accusations that she hanged a dog, a self-described dog rescuer in Caledon was sentenced to a year in prison and banned for life from keeping pets, for a separate incident in which she kept dozens of dogs in filthy conditions in her house.

Rita Mueller, 50, was also ordered to pay restitution of $16,537.03 to the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, for the costs incurred caring for dogs seized from her home.

Mueller's son, Michael, 30, was also fined $2,500.

Her lawyer, Adam Goodman, said he intends to appeal the verdict.

Mueller accepted responsibility for her actions and explained that she was running a dog rescue and got in over her head. Her previous lawyer, Lenny Hochberg, had said in court that she has mental-health problems and lives on social assistance.

Mueller still awaits trial on charges related to the hanging death of a Shar-Pei last August.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Over her head

- The OSPCA searched Mueller's house in 2011 and found 29 dogs "in poor living conditions, flea ridden, some having poor body conditions, and overgrown nails," a statement says. She was charged with five counts of animal cruelty. Three were later dropped.

At Home/Chez Soi.

Mental-health program gets funding boost

A program that ministers to the homeless and mentally ill has been given a $4-million lifeline by the Ontario government.

At Home/Chez Soi was created on the philosophy that stable housing is a catalyst for recovery for those living with mental-health problems and experiencing homelessness. Its federal funding was supposed to end at the end of March, but the cash infusion means the program will continue.

"Providing a home first is, in fact, the right thing to do from a moral and human standpoint … but now we know it is also the right thing to do from a cold dollars-and-cents perspective," Health Minister and newly appointed deputy premier Deb Matthews said at a news conference on Tuesday.

At Home/Chez Soi was created four years ago by the Mental Health Commission of Canada as a demonstration project in five Canadian cities. In Toronto, it is run with the help of Across Boundaries, a mental-health centre that helps people of diverse ethnic backgrounds.

Matthews said the program in Toronto, which provides rent supplements to 216 Torontonians and mental-health supports to 240, has proven its worth and should become a permanent fixture.

Every dollar spent results in $1.50 in savings from the health, justice and social systems, she noted.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

In case you were going

Walking Dead actor cancels Ottawa appearance

Algonquin College in Ottawa plans to hand out refunds after one of its events featuring The Walking Dead actor Norman Reedus had to be cancelled due to a scheduling conflict.

Bill Kitchen, event coordinator of the Algonquin Students' Association, said Tuesday that Reedus is scheduled to work on a feature film next month. He was supposed to give a talk about his acting career on March 11.

"We are obviously very disappointed for our students and the Ottawa public," Kitchen said.

He said refunds will be given to ticket holders starting on Feb. 15.

JOE LOFARO/METRO IN OTTAWA

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Toronto-based singer-songwriter Chloe Charles will be touring Canada to support her debut album in the summer, she said in an interview. CONTRIBUTED

Charles heeds her muse's call

Interview. Having earned acclaim in Europe, Toronto musician Chloe Charles looks to make a breakthrough at home with her debut album

TARIN ELBERT
tarin.elbert@metronews.ca

She sings to us with the voice of an angel, delicate white wings singed black by the hellish heat that comes with living a windswept life.

Think Joni Mitchell in bed with Kate Bush, Tori Amos in her Cornflake Girl daze.

Mitchell was, in fact, the foundation upon which up-and-coming Toronto-based singer-songwriter Chloe Charles built her singular storytelling genius.

"I loved Joni Mitchell's album Blue, it was most influential," Charles said in an interview.

"My mom was into it and it just sunk into my life, found its way into my veins; it is so beautiful. Yes, Mitchell is the one that sticks out the most as an influence, although I was also in love with Lauryn Hill and the Fugees," she said, laughing.

Charles' aforementioned "mom" is one Cynthia Lennon, ex-wife of Yoko's John and mother to long-faded pop star Julian Lennon. Her father married Cynthia when Charles was a teen, bringing a touch of musical royalty to the family and feeding a growing hunger to find her own muse.

A journey with her first album, Break the Balance, which Charles will perform Wednesday at The Revival on College Street, makes it clear her muse has arrived.

It was a dreamy, celestial, yet surprisingly uplifting track called Soon on a Snowflake — "I wrote that in an afternoon" — that first reaped critical praise for the self-taught guitarist. She hasn't looked back since.

"I think that (Soon on a Snowflake) is my headspace most of the time," she laughs. "I am walking around with these feelings in my head, so when I sit down with my guitar to write, it just seems pretty natural.

"I am inspired by everything that is a little bit extreme. A lot of songs on the album are darker and heavier, drawn from painful experiences from the last few years."

Some of the experiences she writes about in her 12-song debut (an EP called Little Green Bud was dropped back in 2011) were earned on the road across the pond, where Charles racked up a gruelling 300 shows in eight countries.

However, from first listen to Break the Balance it's clear that her themes dig deep, exposing a soul that is still seeking, yet to find its centre.

From dealing with an identity crisis on top track Business, to a total rethink of what true bravery really means on Soldier, Charles reinvents every spoke on the songwriters' wheel, then wraps them up in riveting choruses, driven to the fore with sumptuous strings and percussive precision.

"I am putting a lot of energy behind it (Break the Balance), hoping this record can reach a wider audience," said Charles. "I hope it makes it easier for me to spend more time in Canada and allows me to keep creating the way I have been."

Indeed, Charles has received far more attention in Europe than here at home. This may be about to change.

Background

- Chloe Charles was selected as one of only six international artists to showcase at JazzAhead in Europe this spring.
- She has performed at SXSW, NXNE, CMW and Folk Alliance.
- Duane Lundy (Ben Sollee, Vandaveer) shared the reins with Charles on the development of Break the Balance while Peter Moore (Cowboy Junkies, Willie P. Bennett) handled some mastering.

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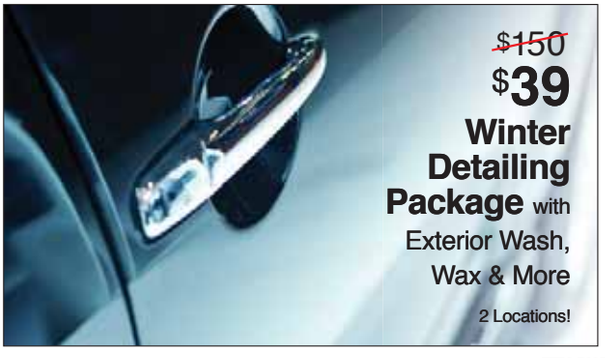

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Zombie apocalypse to hit a province near you

Eerie emergency?
Quebec civil-security symposium will discuss handling a hypothetical zombie attack to illustrate a real-life catastrophe

If zombies do eventually strike in Quebec, the province's public-security department wants to be ready.

Participants at an annual symposium on civil security next week will be discussing how to handle a zombie attack in the province, among other topics.

The zombies, of course, are hypothetical.

But a ministry spokesman assures the zombie exercise has a serious purpose: The living dead-themed drill is meant to illustrate a real-life catastrophic event.

The walking dead

Hypothetical zombie attacks have been used in exercises on emergency preparedness in the United States and British Columbia.

The idea behind the exercise is that if you're ready for zombies, then you're probably ready for any other disaster that may strike. Hypothetical zombie attacks have been used in exercises on emergency preparedness in the United States.

Last May, British Columbia conducted a similar exercise, offering tips on how to prepare for and fend off a fake zombie apocalypse. The B.C. government said at the time that it hoped the exercise would generate awareness of social-media tools that could help the public in real emergencies.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

A member of the Occupy Vancouver movement lies on the ground at the Enbridge offices during a Zombie Walk through downtown Vancouver on Oct. 31, 2011.
JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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'Whitewashing.' Criticism left out of report on F-35 procurement, draft shows

Stinging criticism of the political and bureaucratic fiasco surrounding the F-35 by the country's budget officer and even the auditor general was edited out of the final version of a parliamentary investigation, a draft copy of the report shows.

The Conservative-dominated all-party House of Commons public accounts committee held seven hours of hearings and spent much more time arguing with opposition members behind closed doors last spring and fall over the handling of the stealth-fighter program.

A Nov. 1, 2012, copy of the draft report, obtained by The Canadian Press, shows some of the most pointed critiques of Parliamentary Budget Officer Kevin Page and Auditor General Michael Ferguson — both of whom testified before the committee — were removed or softened in the report's final version.

MP Andrew Saxton, the Conservative who led the government charge during public hearings, did not return calls for comment Monday.

The leaked draft, which is supposed to remain secret under parliamentary rules, clearly demonstrates an attempt to "whitewash" the report, opposition members say.

The committee's final report was released last November. The auditor set off a political firestorm last spring by declaring National Defence and Public Works lowballed the cost of the multibillion-dollar program and did not follow proper procedures in giving it the green light.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"The committee is becoming very dysfunctional and I think there has been a whitewashing."
Liberal MP Gerry Byrne

Ottawa. Panel writes prescriptions for ailing military purchases

An independent report has produced a number of prescriptions for Canada's ailing military procurement system, but stops short of suggesting how the Harper government should administer the cures.

The analysis, written by a special advisory panel to Public Works Minister Rona Ambrose makes a series of recommendations on ways to leverage Canadian industrial participation in billions of dollars in planned defence spending.

But the panel, led by noted businessman Tom Jenkins, didn't address the fundamental question of whether the country would be better served by leaving defence purchasing to a separate agency, the way it's handled in Britain and Australia.

The other option would be for the Harper government to create specialized secretariats, under the umbrella of Public Works, to shepherd each individual purchase, the way it has done with the troubled F-35 stealth-fighter project.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Public Works Minister Rona Ambrose
ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Panel hears of captain's mistakes

The chief mate of a replica 18th-century sailing ship that sank off North Carolina during hurricane Sandy told investigators Tuesday that the ship's captain twice refused his pleas to order the crew to abandon ship.

It wasn't until he made a third plea that the captain gave the order — moments before the ship rolled and tossed the crew into the water.

One member of the HMS Bounty's crew died, and the captain was never found after the ship sank 90 miles off Cape Hatteras during the October storm.

A federal safety panel began hearing testimony in a Portsmouth hotel about what led to the sinking, with chief mate John Svendsen providing a detailed account of what happened in the days, hours and minutes leading up to the loss of the ship.

Svendsen said the ship was taking on water and had no power when it rolled over and sank.

He also told investigators the captain didn't alert coast guard officials of the ship's deteriorating condition when he first suggested it, with Capt. Robin Walbridge choosing to focus on fixing failing generators instead.

Svendsen disagreed with Walbridge on that decision, along with several others.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HMS Bounty

The three-masted sailing ship was built at Smith and Ruhland Shipyard in Lunenburg, N.S., for the 1962 film Mutiny on the Bounty, starring Marlon Brando, and it was featured in several other films over the years, including one of the Pirates of the Caribbean movies.

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A protester prepares to hang a banner before marching through the streets during a demonstration in support of striking Quebec students in Vancouver in May 2012. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Former PQ leader calls for province to consider free tuition

Quebec. Proponents of free education say it's entirely affordable, pointing to other societies that have made it a priority

A memorable debate is shaping up over the principle of zero tuition in Quebec.

The idea of cancelling tuition altogether is not among the options being considered by the Parti Québécois government, as it struggles to find a university funding formula following a year of unrest.

There's one problem: a former PQ premier, Jacques Parizeau, who is a hero to the party's rank and file, has just gone public with a forceful call for the government to consider the policy.

He notes that free university was always the intention when, back in the 1960s, he was a provincial civil servant and the modern university network was created.

Parizeau's public musings have set up an interesting contest. The government minister responsible for the file is rookie politician Pierre Duchesne — who in his previous life was a journalist, and who happened to be Parizeau's biographer.

The biographer-versus-subject dynamic comes two weeks before a critical summit.

At that upcoming summit on higher education, the government intends to propose a freeze on tuition followed by small increases indexed to inflation.

That plan falls somewhere between the freeze or reduction which various students activists are demanding, and the significant increases proposed by the former Liberal government which triggered months of protests. A recent poll suggests the PQ idea has strong support.

But Parizeau says he can't understand why the zero-tuition idea has been discarded so quickly.

It's well known that Quebec is the most heavily indebted province. At the same time, it offers a university education for the lowest rates in the country.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ottawa

Students burned by toilet seats

Six female students at Avalon Public School in Orleans area of Ottawa wound up with skin rashes last Friday due to a cleaning product apparently left on toilet seats by mistake.

"I haven't seen the areas affected myself, but I understand the irritation was in the shape, so that it was pretty easy for them to put two and two together," said Neil Yorke-Slader, superintendent of instruction at the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board. He explained the procession of students attending the office with irritations shocked and angered staff and led to an immediate investigation of cleaning equipment and even litmus-paper tests on toilet seats at the school. Some 900 students attend the school. The school was cleaned top to bottom and parents were notified Sunday evening.

SEAN MCKIBBON/METRO OTTAWA

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KEYS TO E-DATING SUCCESS: HOW TO SHINE ONLINE

If you do decide to find romance on the net, keep these tips in mind to create a winning dating-site profile

Relationship. Establish the type of relationship you are looking for. Are you looking for a fling, casual dating or a potential long-term relationship? After you establish a clear goal, it will be easier to find an online dating service that suits your needs.

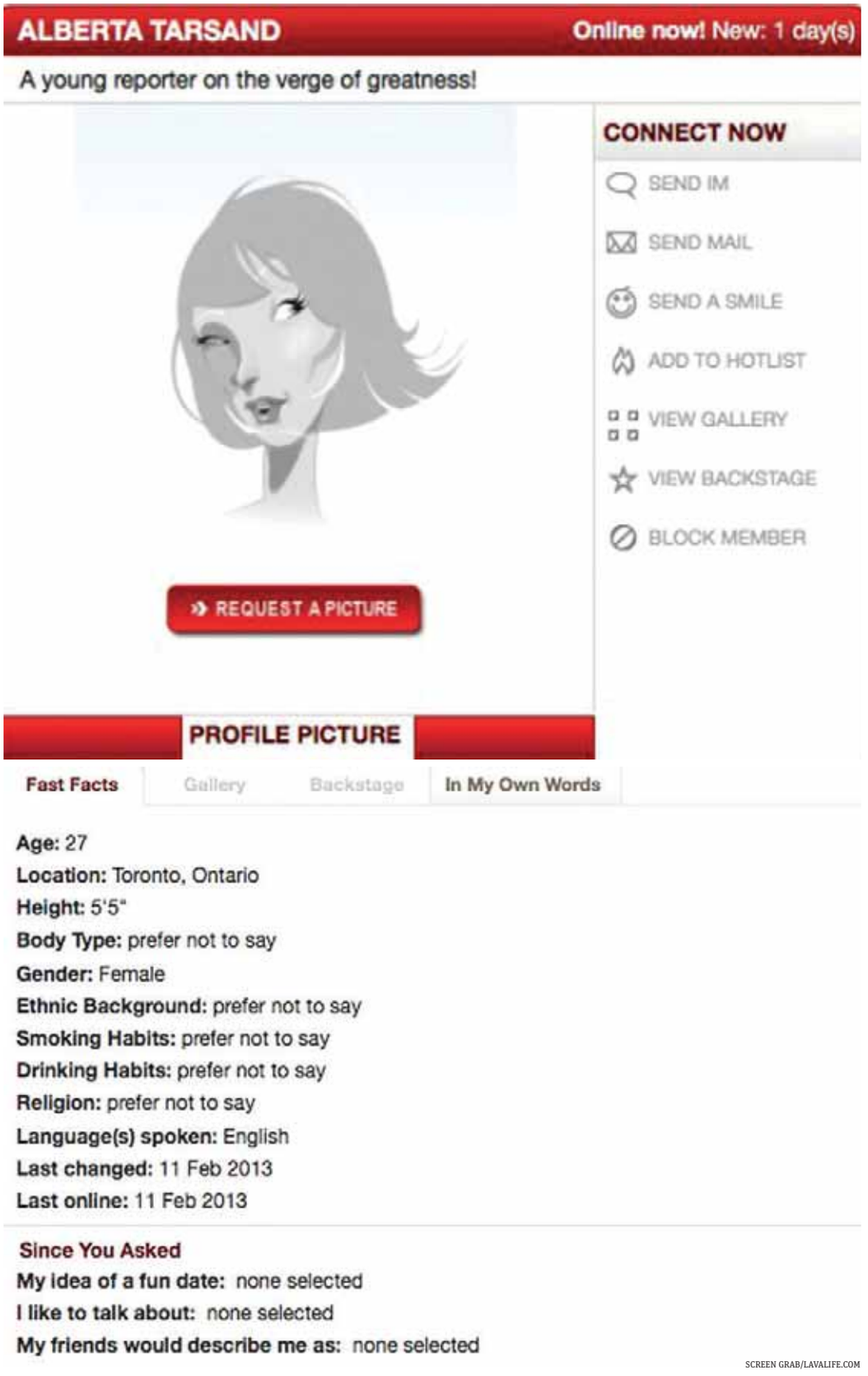
Profile name. Depending on the type of online-dating website you sign up for, your username should indicate you are serious about meeting people. Avoid names with numbers or "xx." Just your first name should suffice if you are wary about using your full name.

Profile photo. Pick a recent photo that shows your true self (not super drunk, not dressed for the clubs and no bikini shots). The most important part is to look confident and happy without trying too hard, and you will attract positive suitors.

Personal facts. Be honest in your profile, especially when it comes to age, body type, whether you smoke or drink and whether you have kids. You wouldn't want the people you meet online to lie about who they are, right?

About me. Your description should be brief, but make it stand out. Try not to sound too clichéd but do take this part of the profile to talk about who you are and why you're trying online dating. Are you too busy with work to go out to the clubs every weekend but are looking to meet someone worth your time?

Interests. Describe your idea of a perfect first date, as this will give an indication of what you like to do for fun. Describe something that sounds engaging and interactive, such as hanging out in a board-game café or playing a round of miniature golf.



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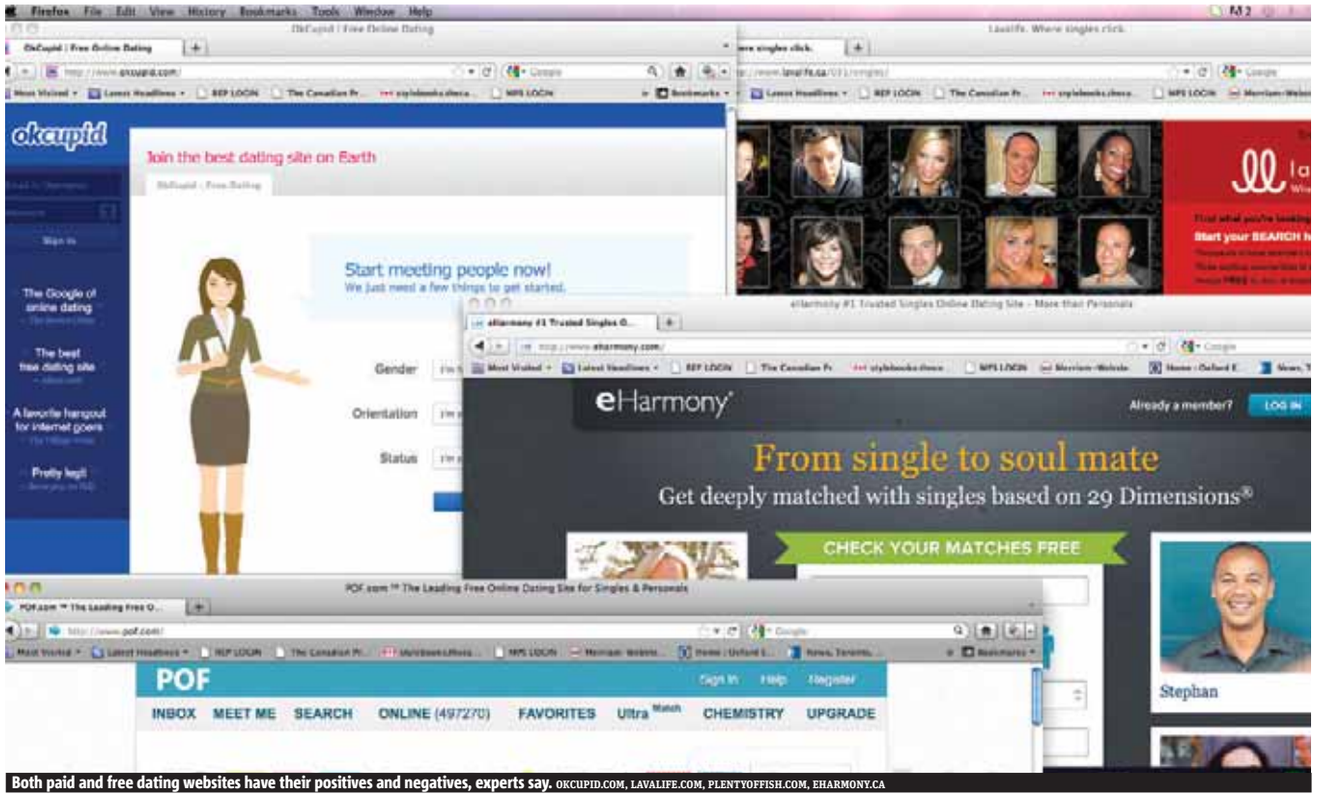
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Both paid and free dating websites have their positives and negatives, experts say. OKCUPID.COM, LAVALIFE.COM, PLENTYOFFISH.COM, EHARMONY.CA

Should you pay to play the dating game?

Where to go. Paid and free sites tend to attract different types of clients with different sets of priorities, experts say

RYAN TUMILTY
Metro in Edmonton

When preparing to jump into the online-dating universe, is it better to jump in with just your heart or with your wallet as well?

As dating sites have cropped up, some have opened their doors to members free of charge, while others have monthly subscriptions for those looking for love.

Kimberly Moffit, Match.com's relationship insider, argues that paid sites are there for more committed individuals who are interested

in serious relationships.

"It just distinguishes the people who are willing to put the investment in and those who aren't," said Moffit. "They are ready to make an investment in their love life."

Moffit argues that any online dating is a good thing, but people on paid sites are more likely to be taking their search seriously.

"They are more likely looking for some of the same things you are," she said.

Christine Hart, a Toronto-based dating coach, said both types of sites have advantages, but free sites tend to attract a different type of prospective dater.

"If they are going to go on the free sites, then they need to be prepared to put in a lot more time sifting through, because the free sites attract people with all levels of goals," she said.

Part of the benefit of paid dating sites is that they attract fewer people, she added.

"You can spend twice as much time sifting through profiles on the free dating sites," she said.

Julie Spira, author of the book The Perils of Cyber-Dating, said she and her clients see benefits to both types of sites.

"It is very common for someone to pick a paid site, and then they will also pick a free site."

She said free sites attract huge numbers of people, which can be appealing simply for the sheer quantity of prospective partners.

"Because they are free ... they have huge critical mass," she said.

Spira said clients who pay for a dating site tend to pay more attention to the service.

"I find that a lot of them log into their paid sites more often because they are invested," she said.

Quoted

"(Paying for a site) just distinguishes the people who are willing to put the investment in and those who aren't." Kimberly Moffit, Match.com's relationship insider

Exclusively online

For all our stories on online dating, including infographics, video and more, go to metronews.ca

Part 3 of 3

MONDAY
Is traditional dating dead?

YESTERDAY
The rise of the e-dating jungle

TODAY
E-dating success: How to shine online

Stay safe. Don't let your heart get you in trouble online: Cops

While the online-dating world is full of opportunities, it can also be full of perils.

Police have noticed that the excitement that comes with online romance can attract the wrong type of people — those who may cause physical or financial harm.

Acting Sgt. Kathy Macdonald with the Calgary Police Service said new relationships sometimes prevent people from seeing the bigger picture.

"When people get wrapped up in a relationship, they can't see what's going on," she said.

Macdonald said fraud artists using dating sites can go after many potential victims in just one day.

"They will often get a hold of a lot of people at the same time," she said.

According to Macdonald, scam artists often approach someone and strike up a conversation before claiming to have run into sudden and unexplained financial difficulties.

She said if they receive money from their victims, new problems will emerge, and there will be more requests for help.

Macdonald said there could also be physical dangers and she cautions people to take things slowly in the early days of a new relationship.

"Listen to your intuition and be aware of your surroundings," she advised.

Macdonald said making the first date a group meeting is a good idea, but it's essential that it be in a public place and that you tell people where you're going.

"Really, you don't know that person; you don't know who is going to show up."

RYAN TUMILTY/METRO IN EDMONTON

E-Bytes: Five free iPhone apps for tech-savvy couples

- **Couple App.** Couple is like Facebook, but it can only be shared by two people. You can send messages, chat via Facetime, share photos and video, create moments via doodles and track important dates and tasks. There's also a "Thinking of you" button when that's all you want to say.

- **Avocado App.** Like Couple, Avocado is shared with only one special person. You can send private messages, track milestones together and share them on Twitter as a pair and even send virtual hugs and kisses so you're never too far away from your sweetheart.

- **Tokii App.** Tokii helps you get in touch with your partner's feelings. You can send each other notes starting with "I feel" or "You're making me feel." The app aims to keep couples engaged and aware of one another's moods by providing interactive games and relationship advice, which can take your relationship to the next level.

- **Wunderlist 2.** Although not exclusively for couples, nothing is more annoying than your partner forgetting to pick up the dry-cleaning or something at the grocery store. Wunderlist 2 helps couples plan, share and keep track of tasks and even plan vacations together. It's able to sync the lists across all the devices you are using.

- **Between App.** Between is a private-messaging space that lets you and your partner create a chronological timeline tracking the special moments in your relationship. You can bookmark your favourite memories, such as photos and messages, and store them in a Memory Box, as well as find date-night deals via the Event Box.

Patrick Brazeau. Senator shows up for work in time to be put on forced leave

Senators have voted to force Sen. Patrick Brazeau, who is facing criminal charges, to take a leave of absence.

The Conservative motion passed Tuesday "to protect the dignity and reputation of the Senate and the public trust and confidence in Parliament."

Brazeau, 38, made a surprise appearance just prior to the vote, which also gave a Senate committee the power to cut off access to his expense account.

Brazeau, who is currently free on bail, has been charged with assault and sexual assault.

If convicted, he could either be suspended or expelled by the Senate or he could choose to resign.

Brazeau was charged on the very day a Senate committee declared it would call in auditors to review his housing expenses. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Anti-Senate

32%

A Canadian Press/Harris Decima poll says 32 per cent of respondents feel the Senate should be abolished.

Sen. Patrick Brazeau leaves a vote in which he was forced to take a leave of absence by the Senate chamber. ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Wanted ex-cop believed to have died in burning cabin

California. Deputy killed in latest shootout with man thought to be Christopher Dorner

The extraordinary manhunt for the former Los Angeles police officer suspected of three murders converged Tuesday on a mountain cabin where authorities believe he barricaded himself inside, engaged in a shootout that killed a deputy and then never emerged as the home went up in flames.

A single gunshot was heard from within, and a charred body was found inside.

TV helicopters showed the fire burning freely with no apparent effort to extinguish it. Smoke rose into the sky above the snow-covered woods near Big Bear Lake, a resort town about 128 kilometres east of Los Angeles.

If the man inside proves to be Christopher Dorner, the search for the most wanted man in America will have ended the way he expected — death, with police in pursuit.

Thousands of officers had been on the hunt for the former Navy reservist since police said he launched a campaign to exact revenge against the Los Angeles Police Department for his firing. They say he threatened to bring "warfare" to officers and their families, setting off a search for him across the Southwest and Mexico.

After the man holed up in the cabin, there was a second gun battle with San Bernardino County deputies, two of whom were shot. One died, and the other was expected to live after surgery. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Wasn't yet identified

"We have reason to believe that it is him."

Bernardino County sheriff's spokeswoman Cynthia Bachman on the man inside the blazing cabin.

The cabin in Big Bear, Calif., where ex-Los Angeles police officer Christopher Dorner was believed to have barricaded himself, burns unopposed on Tuesday. KABC-TV/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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State of the Union.
Speech includes Obama's promise to end war by '15

President Barack Obama said Tuesday he will bring home within a year about half of the 66,000 U.S. troops now in Afghanistan, shrinking the force to the size he found it when he entered the White House vowing to reinvigorate a stalemated war.

More will leave the battlefield in 2014, he said, but he did not spell out what U.S. military presence would remain after 2014, when the U.S.-led combat mission is scheduled to end. The stated goal is to prepare Afghanistan's army and police to handle the Taliban insurgency largely on their own by then.

Obama said that his war goals could be achieved by bringing 34,000 U.S. troops home by this time next year, leaving somewhere between 32,000 and 34,000 to support and train Afghan forces.

Without going into specifics, Obama said the phase-out of American combat troops in Afghanistan will continue in 2014. "This drawdown will continue. And by the end of next year, our war in Afghanistan will be over," he said, adding that al-Qaida is no longer the threat it was on Sept. 11, 2001.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

President Barack Obama gestures toward Vice-President Joe Biden and House Speaker John Boehner before his speech. CHARLES DHARAPAK/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Obama: 'Nuclear tests do not make North Korea more secure'

A South Korean protester shouts slogans in Seoul on Tuesday during an anti-North Korea rally following the report of a nuclear test conducted by the repressive regime. LEE JIN-MAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Retaliatory strike unlikely. International community decries regime's continued pursuit of weapon capable of reaching U.S. shores

Defying UN warnings, North Korea conducted its third nuclear test in the remote, snowy northeast on Tuesday, taking a crucial step toward its goal of building a bomb small enough to be fitted on a missile capable of striking the United States.

North Korea said the atomic test was merely its "first response" to what it called U.S. threats, and said it will continue with unspecified "second and third measures of greater intensity" if Washington maintains its hostility.

The underground test, which set off powerful seismic waves, drew immediate condemnation from Washington, the UN and others. Even its only major ally, China, summoned the North's ambassador for a dressing-down.

President Barack Obama, who gave a State of the Union address later Tuesday, said nuclear tests "do not make North Korea more secure." Instead, North Korea has "increasingly isolated and impoverished its people through its ill-advised pursuit of weapons of mass destruction," he said in a statement.

But the Obama administration's options for a response are limited, and a U.S. military strike is highly unlikely.

In an emergency session, the UN Security Council unanimously said the test poses "a clear threat to international peace and security" and pledged further action.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"(North Korea has) increasingly isolated and impoverished its people through its ill-advised pursuit of weapons of mass destruction."

Barack Obama

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When Benedict's gone, he'll really be gone: Vatican

New pope by Easter. Plan for monastery retirement suggests post-papacy life will be 'very quiet,' says spokesman

A statuette of Pope Benedict XVI. The sign's inscription means "goodbye." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Vatican went out of its way Tuesday to declare that for Pope Benedict XVI, retirement means just that: Retirement.

With speculation swirling around his future role, the Vatican's chief spokesman explicitly stated that Benedict will not influence the election of his successor. And he deepened the sense of finality by saying that Benedict's papal ring and other powerful emblems of authority will be destroyed after his Feb. 28 abdication — just as they are after a papal death.

So, while the first papal resignation in 600 years has left behind a vast uncharted territory to navigate — how does one address or even dress a retired pope? — the church has tried to send a clear message that Benedict will not be pulling strings from behind the scenes. His brother, Monsignor Georg Ratzinger, says the pope will be withdrawing even further from religious life — probably even giving up his beloved theological writing. "The pope will surely say absolutely nothing about the process of the election," spokesman Fr. Federico Lombardi said. The Vatican has already picked out the pope's home: a four-storey building attached to a monastery on the north edge of the Vatican gardens. Spokesman Greg Burke said the fact that he has chosen to live in a monastery "suggests that his role is going to be ... very quiet."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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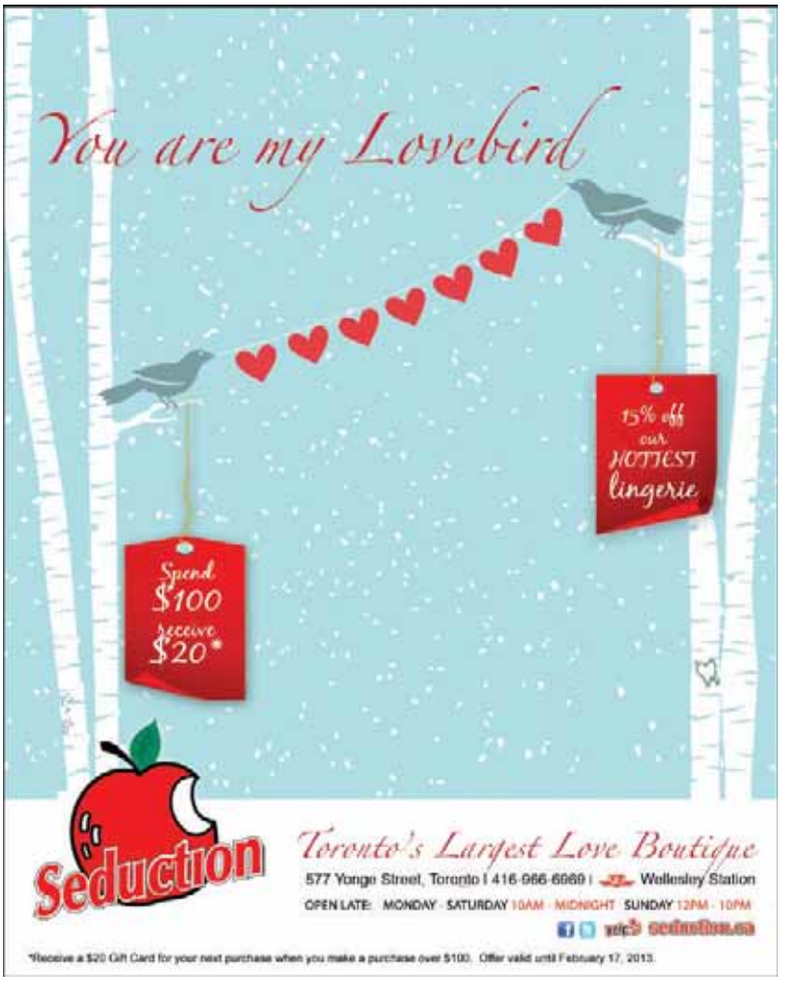
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Activists belonging to the women's movement FEMEN demonstrate in Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris on Tuesday.
MICHEL EULER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ding, dong ... the Pope's now gone

Celebration protest. Group of semi-nude women bang the bells of Notre Dame to mark Benedict's resignation

Topless women activists pounded a huge church bell in Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris Tuesday to "celebrate" the Pope's resignation.

The nine women from Ukrainian feminist group Femen had their chests and backs emblazoned with the words "Pope No More." They didn't explain their action except to say they are "provocateurs" celebrating Pope Benedict XVI's decision to step down.

At one point the women rang an enormous bell on display in the hall of the landmark cathedral.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

One protest, two causes

The women said they were also demonstrating in support of gay marriage. France's lower house voted Tuesday to legalize it.

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Tattered flag at Pearson's grave

Time for an upgrade?
As we approach National Flag Day, Metro sees room for improvement at ex-PM's resting place

JOE LOFARO
Metro in Ottawa

Just days before Canada marks Flag Day, a tattered Canadian flag flew at the gravesite of the former prime minister credited with giving us our own flag.

Lester Bowles Pearson, Canada's 14th prime minister and 1957 Nobel Peace Prize winner, was buried at the MacLaren Cemetery in Wakefield, Que., in 1972.

Perched atop of a snowy hill, the gravesite offers majestic views of the Gatineau Park. Flapping directly above the burial site is a Canadian flag that is ripped on the vertical red stripe opposite the pole. Next to it is a plaque with Pearson's photo and an inscription outlining his contributions to Canada, including the maple-leaf flag.

It was 48 years ago the Liberal prime minister introduced the maple-leaf flag in a bid to adopt a national standard in time for Canada's centennial celebration. Since 1965, Feb. 15 has been celebrated as National Flag Day in Canada. The Pearson gravesite flag shows signs of prolonged wear and tear, likely due to weather.

But it wasn't until Parks Canada was contacted by Metro on Tuesday that the department was aware of the flag's decrepit condition.

'Marriage for all' bill. France's lower house approves gay marriage

France's lower house of parliament approved a sweeping bill on Tuesday to legalize gay marriage and allow same-sex couples to adopt children, handing a major legislative victory to President Francois Hollande's Socialists on a divisive social issue.

The measure, approved in the National Assembly in a 329-to-229 vote, puts France on track to join about a dozen mostly European nations that allow gay marriage and comes despite a string of recent demonstrations by opponents of the so-called "marriage for all" bill.

Polls indicate a narrow majority of French support legalizing gay marriage, though that support falls when questions about the adoption and conception of children come into play.

The assembly has been debating the bill, and voting on its individual articles in recent weeks. The overall legislation now goes in the coming weeks to the Senate, which also is controlled by the governing Socialists and their allies.

With Tuesday's vote, France joins Britain in taking a major legislative step in recent weeks toward allowing gay marriage and adoption — making them the largest European countries to do so. The Netherlands, Belgium, Norway and Spain, as well as Argentina, Canada and South Africa have authorized gay marriage, along with nine U.S. states and the District of Columbia.

The issue has exposed fault lines between a progressive-minded leftist legislative majority in officially secular France, and the country's conservative religious roots. Critics have railed that the bill would erode the traditional family. Socialists, however, sought to depict the issue as one of equal rights.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Equal rights

"Liberty, Equality and Fraternity."

France's Revolution-era motto. Governing Socialists depicted the same-sex marriage and adoption issue as one of equal rights, and they played off the famed motto.

Seeking samba supremacy

Performers from the Unidos de Vila Isabel samba school parade during Carnival celebrations at the iconic Sambadrome in Rio de Janeiro on Tuesday. Rio de Janeiro's samba schools vied for the title of the year's best in the all-night-long Carnival. HASSAN AMMAR/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paparazzi pics. Pregnant Kate in bikini? Royals condemn planned publication

Royal officials in Britain have expressed disappointment that paparazzi shots of Prince William and his wife on a beach holiday in the Caribbean may be published by an Italian magazine.

St. James's Palace said Tuesday that publishing the photos would be a "clear breach of the couple's right to privacy."

The palace did not say whether officials would be prepared to take legal action against the gossip magazine.

The photos reportedly show the pregnant Duchess of Cambridge — the former Kate Middleton — wearing a bikini and strolling on a beach with Prince William on the island of Mustique.

The Italian gossip magazine Chi was reportedly planning to publish the pictures Wednesday.

Last September, the magazine — which is owned by former Italian premier Silvio Berlusconi — published a 26-page special featuring topless photos of the duchess while she and William vacationed in the south of France.

The royal couple took legal action to halt the use of those intimate photos, but had only limited success.

Although a French court ordered the gossip magazine Closer to stop further publication of the pictures, they went on to be published in Berlusconi's Chi, as well as other publications across Europe.

They also received wide publication on the legally hard-to-control Internet.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Duchess of Cambridge is seen in London after viewing a portrait of herself in January. GETTY IMAGES

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Multinationals not paying their fair share: OECD

Fat-cat tax. Global forum report claims lenient taxes create competitive disadvantage

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development says large multinationals are using legal loopholes to avoid paying their fair share of taxes and that global solutions are needed to combat the problem.

The OECD report says many rules designed to protect multinational corporations from being double-taxed go too far and sometimes allow them to pay no taxes at all.

It says such rules do not properly reflect today's economic integration across borders, the value of intellectual property or new communications technologies.

The G20 countries commissioned the OECD study, which was released Tuesday ahead of a weekend meeting of finance ministers and central bankers from 20 of the world's leading economies.

The OECD says the gaps that enable multinationals to eliminate or reduce their taxation give them an unfair competitive advantage over smaller businesses.

That hurts investment, growth and employment and can leave average citizens footing a larger chunk of the tax bill, the OECD says.

"These strategies, though technically legal, erode the tax base of many countries and threaten the stability of the international tax system," OECD Secretary General Angel Gurria said Tuesday in releasing the study.

"As governments and their citizens are struggling to make ends meet, it is critical that all taxpayers — private and corporate — pay their fair amount of taxes and trust the international tax system is transparent."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR 99.73¢ (+ 0.16¢)

TSX 12,789.02 (+ 40.87)

OIL $97.51 US (+$0.48)

GOLD $1,649.60 (+$0.50)

Natural gas: $3.23 (- 6¢)
Dow Jones: 14,018.70 (+ 47.46)

Exploiting the rules

"They also claim expenses and losses in high-tax countries and declare profits in jurisdictions with a low or no tax rate." An excerpt from an OECD report

Cellphone charges

Rogers, Telus urge watchdog to scrap the wireless cap

Two of the country's largest telecom companies have some advice for Canada's telecommunications regulator as it considers imposing new rules for cellphone contracts: scrap the $50 cap.

A $50 spending limit on extra wireless data charges is one of several ideas on the table as the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunication Commission holds hearings on a proposed new wireless code.

But executives from Rogers Communications and Telus say a spending cap would be a bad idea.

"That's very disruptive to customers," Rogers' regulatory chief Ken Engelhart said Tuesday. "It's very disruptive to be cut off."

Under the CRTC's draft code, wireless companies would have to suspend some services when a customer reaches $50 in additional charges more than what they pay for their monthly plan, or a different amount that the consumer would set. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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WILL BENEDICT GET TO KEEP HIS POPEMOBILE?

JUST SAYIN'
Paul Sullivan
metronews.ca

The Pope can't retire, can he?

I was under the impression that he had to stick it out to the bitter end, like poor old John Paul II, who endured two assassination attempts, Parkinson's, a number of cancer scares and a tracheotomy, finally expiring close to his 85th birthday after 25 years on the Papal Throne.

But Benedict the XVI isn't waiting for heaven to call, announcing — in Latin, no less (which adds the kind of gravity only a dead language can deliver) — that he's gone at the end of the month.

Seeing as a pope hasn't resigned since 1415, no one is quite sure what to think or do. I mean, who wants to be the pope when there already is one, albeit retired, looking over your shoulder? It's hard enough being infallible; try it when there's a former incumbent with 20-20 hindsight (even more infallible) kicking around.

Big shoes to fill

Seeing as a pope hasn't resigned since 1415, no one is quite sure what to think or do. I mean, who wants to be the pope when there already is one, albeit retired, looking over your shoulder?

Along with how can you go from being infallible to inactive, Benedict's announcement prompts numerous questions.

For instance, will they set up a retirement wing at Castel Gandolfo, the Pope's summer retreat, complete with a putting green where the retired pontiff can play a little golfo?

Does he have to give back the Shoes of the Fisherman? Or does the new pope get to shop for new shoes?

How about the Keys to the Kingdom? Does he have to hand them in to the Swiss Guards at the end of his shift on Feb. 28?

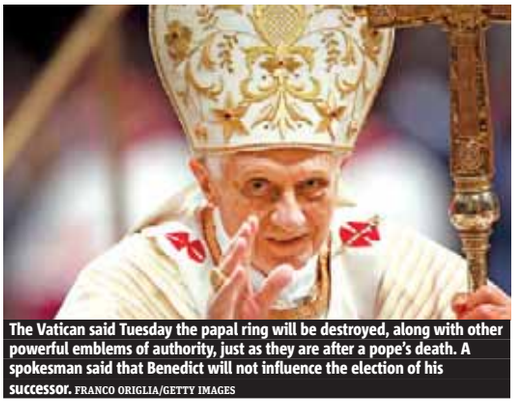
Ex-presidents get to keep their secret security details; does a retired prelate get to keep the Popemobile so he can tool around Rome in relative comfort and security?

What do we call a former pope? Your Former Holiness? Is he still holy, or is there only enough holiness for one pope at a time?

Benedict is more than a little conservative — and more than a little cranky. So the College of Cardinals is going to have to take that into account when anointing the next pope. How can they pick a big (literally) liberal like John XXIII when Benedict is still around, quick to observe that they'd never get away with that when HE was Il Papa?

Still, Benedict's timing is almost infallible. The papacy is in real need of a refresh. Along with the usual threats from sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll, Roman Catholicism has been rocked by a series of unholy scandals, some of them involving the Vatican (the, er, butler did it). A new, progressive pope could go a long way in recapturing the spiritual high ground.

Let's hope that, whoever he is, he's ready to shop for a new pair of shoes.



The Vatican said Tuesday the papal ring will be destroyed, along with other powerful emblems of authority, just as they are after a pope's death. A spokesman said that Benedict will not influence the election of his successor. FRANCO ORIGLIA/GETTY IMAGES

Unlikely bedfellows bunk up

LENNY IGNELZI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Venkman's prophecy

Dogs and cats! Living together!

It may sound like a doomed love story, but some dogs love big cats.

Cheetahs are the fastest mammals in the world, but they also are the world's biggest scaredy-cats — so much so that they don't breed easily and are in danger of extinction.

Some zoos are introducing "companion dogs" to serve as playmates and to provide the cats with an example.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dinner time

"In this relationship, the dog is dominant, but we look for dogs that want to be a buddy.... Dogs worry about their cats. They protect their cats."

Janet Rose-Hinostroza, animal training supervisor at the San Diego Zoo Safari Park

Rose-Hinostroza said that because the dogs are the dominant animal in the relationship, mealtimes are always spent apart. The dogs eat kibble, and the cheetahs eat steak. "If they ate together there would be one really fat dog and a really skinny cheetah," she said.

Endangered species

Population drops over 100 years

A century ago there were 100,000 cheetahs in the wild, said Jack Grisham, vice-president of animal collections at the St. Louis Zoo. Today there are fewer than 12,000. The species has become extinct in at least 13 countries. There are about 280 captive cheetahs in zoos across the U.S.

As efforts to save the species continue, Grisham worries there is no wild to send them home to because habitat is being swallowed up by developers. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quick like a cheetah

3.4

A cheetah's claws don't retract, so they have footing that takes them from zero to 96 kilometres per hour in 3.4 seconds.
Cheetahs use their tails like a rotor to balance while they are running.
Their top speed is 100 kilometres an hour based on size, but they can run that fast only for 20 or 30 seconds.
Extending that to a minute or more can be lethal.

Metropolitan Panel

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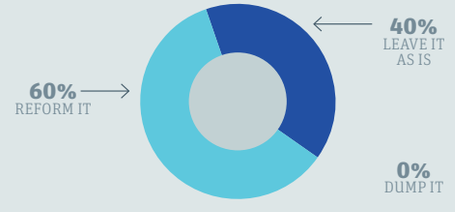
What should Canada do with the Senate?



Twitter

@JasimMalik7:
Kudos to Bell for their efforts against mental health stigma. #BellLetsTalk

@Staci_McC:
Mental illness is nothing to be ashamed of; but stigma, bias and ignorance shame us all. #BellLetsTalk #BellLetsTalk #BellLetsTalk

@jmcnally:
Wrestling dropped from Olympics? I guess they needed to make room for Wii Bowling. :(

@YoungGooby16:
Wrestling was taken out of the olympics, yet synchronized swimming and golf are in ...

@atousagottwitts:
Raptors better kill this game tonight! #Toronto #NBA

@d_phrase:
Survived the dog park. No coyotes. Just lots of news crews. #Toronto

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M&M'S® SPOKES CANDIES CALL IT QUITS!

Red and Yellow shock fans with resignation letter.

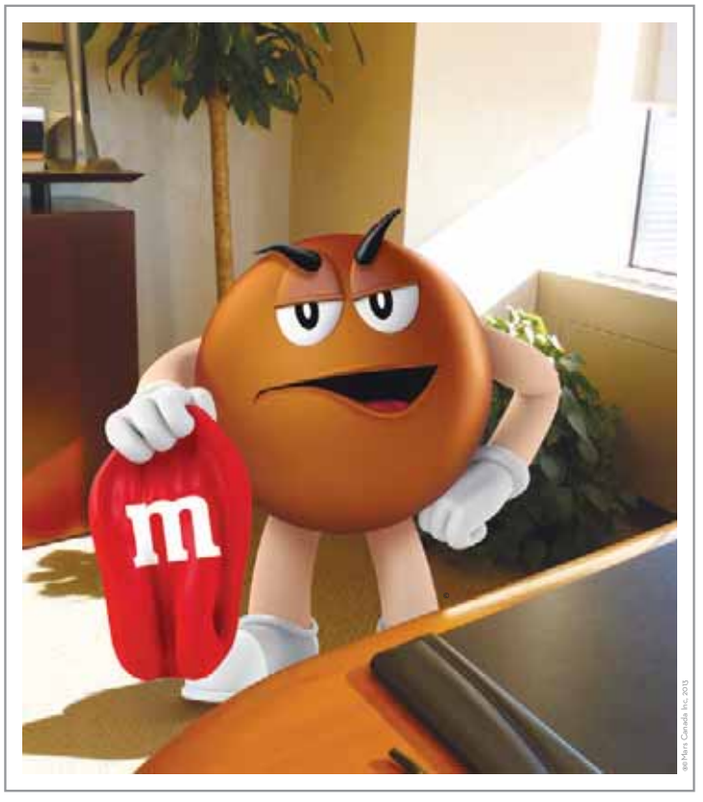
Milk chocolate lovers across the country today are mourning the loss of *M&M'S* iconic spokes candies Red and Yellow, following Tuesday's public announcement that they are hanging up their '*M*'s' and parting ways with the *M&M'S* team immediately to avoid being eaten.

"Those two have been with us for almost 60 years, so it came as a real shock" said *M&M'S* Chief Chocolate Officer Ms Brown, following the leak of Red and Yellow's resignation letter to the press on Friday. "But don't forget – the rest of us *M&M'S* spokes candies deal with the same problem everyday. Worse, I always get people smirking at me because they think I'm naked!" she continued.

The rant-filled resignation letter – which can be read in its entirety on facebook.com/mmscanada and on twitter @mmscanada – is quite abrasive and aggressive, complicating the possibility of any reconciliation. In their letter, the former spokes candies cite their daily fear of being eaten, among other things, as the main reason for resigning – going so far as to blame Canadians for their untamed love of milk chocolate.

Most *M&M'S* fans have been reacting to their departure with disappointment. "I loved Red and Yellow. You can't replace those two. It just won't be the same without them" says Craig Brandon, longtime *M&M'S* fan. Others are angry. "What the heck! This is how you thank your fans?" complains Jennifer Machey. And meanwhile, some people seemed confused. "Does this mean they're hiring? My grandson needs a summer job" said a man by the name of 'Bugsy'. As for the other *M&M'S* spokes candies – they wouldn't return our calls.

The departure of Red and Yellow as the mascots of the *M&M'S* brand has sparked speculation as to who will take over leading the corporate image. When asked if the company plans to promote from within or hire outside to fill the role of Red and Yellow, a company PR agent responded,



"I loved Red and Yellow. You can't replace those two. It just won't be the same without them."

Says Craig Brandon, longtime M&M's fan.

"You have to understand the position we're in now. Red and Yellow broke the mold. It's going to be very hard to fill their shoes, and that's not candy-coating it." Reactions on twitter have linked to leaked images of potential mascots sporting colours like Maroon and Sea Foam. The PR agent would not comment on the leaked images at this time.

Red and Yellow have since been spotted roaming around without their iconic '*M*' emblazoned candy shells on.

Perhaps it hasn't yet dawned on them that they are now naked. Whatever the case may be, one thing is for certain – the former *M&M'S* mascots have achieved celebrity status over the years and will surely be missed. Keep following this breaking news story as it unfolds at facebook.com/mmscanada and @mmscanada on twitter.

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Beautiful franchise?

Finding the next cash cow

IN FOCUS
Richard Crouse
scene@metronews.ca

Film studio executives are always on the lookout for properties that can be spun into profitable movie franchises.

And for good reason.

Following an interesting set of characters over the course of multiple movies can be a cash cow. The James Bond movies have earned more than $6 billion, while Harry, Ron and Hermione have raked in almost $8 billion since their series debut in 2001.

This weekend producers are hoping to kick off the Beautiful Creatures franchise. The supernatural romance has Twilight-ish overtones, a cast that mixes new stars like Emmy Rossum with established faces like Viola Davis and Emma Thompson, and the kind of good versus evil tale that propelled Harry Potter to the upper echelons of the box office.

But not all movies catch on with audiences in the way that the super spy and wizard have.

I Am Number Four, starring Alex Pettyfer and Glee's Dianna Agron, fizzled. Rotten Tomatoes said, "familiar plot and unconvincing performances add up to one noisy, derivative and ultimately forgettable sci-fi thriller." Not really the stuff of ongoing franchises.

With sales of more than 60 million copies, the book series Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events seemed to have natural franchise possibilities. With 13 books in the collection there's source material galore, but even though the Jim Carrey movie did well no sequels emerged.

Emmy Rossum stars in Beautiful Creatures. CONTRIBUTED

Good girl gone bad

Emmy Rossum. Actress ditches 'nice girl' roles to play deadly siren in Beautiful Creatures

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

Actress and singer Emmy Rossum is tired of playing the good girl, which is why she jumped at the chance to take on the role of deadly siren Ridley in the screen adaptation of the best-selling young adult novel Beautiful Creatures. Being bad, she insists, is just more fun.

The film's leads, Alden Ehrenriech and Alice Englert, said they initially passed on the film and had to be convinced to do it. How about you?

No, I was totally selfishly wanting to be in the movie because this is such a fun character. I read (the script) and then I read the first book and auditioned, got the part and was overjoyed. I love the character, she's so ballsy and fun and a different kind of villain than we're used to seeing.

With this and Shameless, you're playing some really interesting, juicy characters, different from the types of roles you started with.

Nice girl roles, mhmm. Playing the nice girl in Day After Tomorrow, Poseidon, Phantom of the Opera, those kinds of characters were coming more easily to me in terms of just getting the parts. I think that these characters for me were just more thrilling because I like to try to find the humanity and emotional understanding of characters that don't always do the right thing. I think that grey area is more fun to explore, it's more close to real life. What I like to do in characters is play against what you think that stereotype of that person would be.

You think about this girl (in Beautiful Creatures) who's a villain, who's happy to watch men get run over by trains walking toward her, you think of somebody who's quite malicious. But if you play it with a sense of fun and happiness, all of a sudden it becomes, "Oh, that's an interesting choice."

Congratulations on the season four renewal for Shameless.

Thank you. I'm excited to see where the character could go. The rest of this season has me working in different jobs until I seem to kind of find a steadier job as a telemarketer for a company called Universal Cup that makes disposable beverage cups. And I have a very cute, interesting boss, which can prove to be a problem.

You have a new album out, Sentimental Journey, with songs from the mid-20th century.

It's an ongoing struggle and negotiation with my own brain, trying to figure out what project gets what amount of time. But I really wanted to make this record, which is kind of why I did it with my own money and then partnered with Warners to release it, because I've always loved this kind of music. This is all the music that I grew up with, so there were obvious ones that I wanted to put on, like Frank Sinatra's Summer Wind and Apple Blossom Time, and then there were others that kind of fell into my lap.

Exclusively online

Go online to hear Jeremy Irons — who also stars in Beautiful Creatures — have a go at giving GPS directions at metronews.ca

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Lending a voice to animated aliens

Escape from Planet Earth. Metro talks to Jessica Alba and Rob Corddry about their new film, nerd-burgers and family flicks

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

Escape from Planet Earth hits theatres Feb. 14. CONTRIBUTED

Escape from Planet Earth stars Jessica Alba and Rob Corddry sit down with Metro to talk about their new animated film — but things get silly pretty fast. And Alba has a special message to kids: don't be too popular in high school.

You've been doing this together for a bit. At what point do you just start messing with each other in interviews?
Rob Corddry: God no!
Jessica Alba: I don't know. No, I would never do that. That's, like, so rude. Plus, he's like my elder, so I just try not to be disrespectful.
RC: That's true. So you sense the wisdom, and you just want to sort of bathe in it. You want to bathe in my wisdom.
JA: Yeah, I do. I mean just the fact that I'm even here is ... it's a blessing. I'm very lucky. I'm pinching myself. Is this a dream?
RC: This is really good for me, thank you.

How many times do you think audiences need to be told before they finally figure out that smart people should be respected?
RC: That it's a good thing, being smart? Well, this is a very good time for nerds in general. So hopefully you're seeing it a lot more because it is more pervasive now, and kids will want to be smart.
JA: Like, anyone who peaks in high school is a loser in life. So don't peak in high school.
RC: Yeah, do poorly in high school.
JA: Socially! Don't peak socially. Just make sure you're unpopular. Right?
RC: Oh God, yeah. I hope my kids are just nerdy introverts.
JA: Nerd-burgers.

What do you look for, as parents, in a family film?
RC: I like to enjoy it myself. It makes it a lot easier, right?
JA: Something that you don't hate is awesome as a parent.
RC: Because you're going to watch it a lot. We're lucky, too. I think it's a good time to be parents in terms of media. Like, I missed the whole ... what are the Australian dudes that sing?
JA: The Teletubbies? And the Wiggles. And the Barney.
RC: The Barney. We missed all of that. We have Pixar, and [Escape from Planet Earth]. So that's great.

Well, I like to see that you're not actually tearing each other apart.
JA: Just wait till you leave. It's on.

Exclusively online

Metro also caught up with Escape from Planet Earth co-stars Sofia Vergara and William Shatner. While Vergara had some kind words for her fans back home in Colombia, things got a little weird with Shatner. To see the video, go to metronews.ca

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‘Utterly unapologetic’ play brings humour to the subject of race

Clybourne Park. Critically acclaimed work now on stage at Panasonic Theatre in Toronto

STEVE GOW
scene@metronews.ca

According to Joel Greenberg, the play Clybourne Park may be the first Barack-Obama-era work of modern theatre.

Not that Obama had anything to do with it, necessarily.

“Race is discussed and referred to in ways I’ve certainly not seen presented on stage,” said the director recently while discussing the play’s three-week run at the Panasonic Theatre.

“It’s direct, it’s uncomfortable, it’s clumsy and it’s funny. In the best sense of satire, you are allowed to laugh at somebody else’s pain but you also pay a price for that.”

The Pulitzer-Prize-winning drama about a battle over race and real estate may force its audience to ask queasy questions about themselves, but Bruce Norris’s carefully crafted script has also earned accolades for simply being hilarious.

“The worst thing you can do certainly in good writing is to telegraph or tell the audience what they’re supposed to think.

“I haven’t had the experience of working with comedy writing that is so finely structured and utterly unapologetic,” said Greenberg.

“It’s a beautiful read but it’s really meant to be experienced,” said star Audrey Dwyer.

“When you see it, it really explodes in front of you and you experience it in what the characters say to each other and how they say it. It’s really quite shocking.”

Having begun as an off-Broadway hit in 2010, Clybourne Park found success in London before it returned to Broadway’s spotlight.

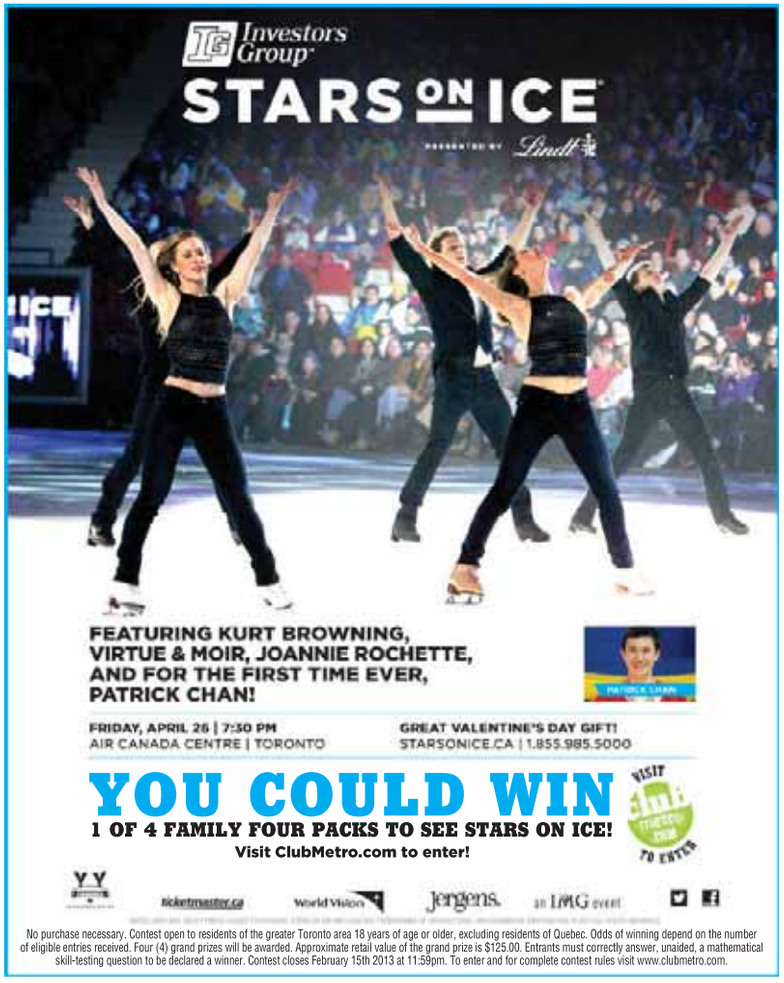
In fact, having earned so many awards, one might even expect reviving such a play to elicit some pressure.

“We chose the play because we loved the play,” said Greenberg, admitting Clybourne’s rights were procured before it took home all the hardware. “Instead of doing just a really fine play, we’re now doing a really fine, multi-award-winning play.”

Why it wins awards

“(It) reveals how complicated it is to talk about race,” said star Audrey Dwyer. “(And) more than ever, we all have trouble talking about race.”

Jeff Lillico (Jim), left, Sterling Jarvis (Albert), Maria Ricossa (Bev) and Audrey Dwyer (Francine) star in Clybourne Park, which is now playing for three weeks at the Panasonic Theatre. CONTRIBUTED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The four-year-old that makes more than you

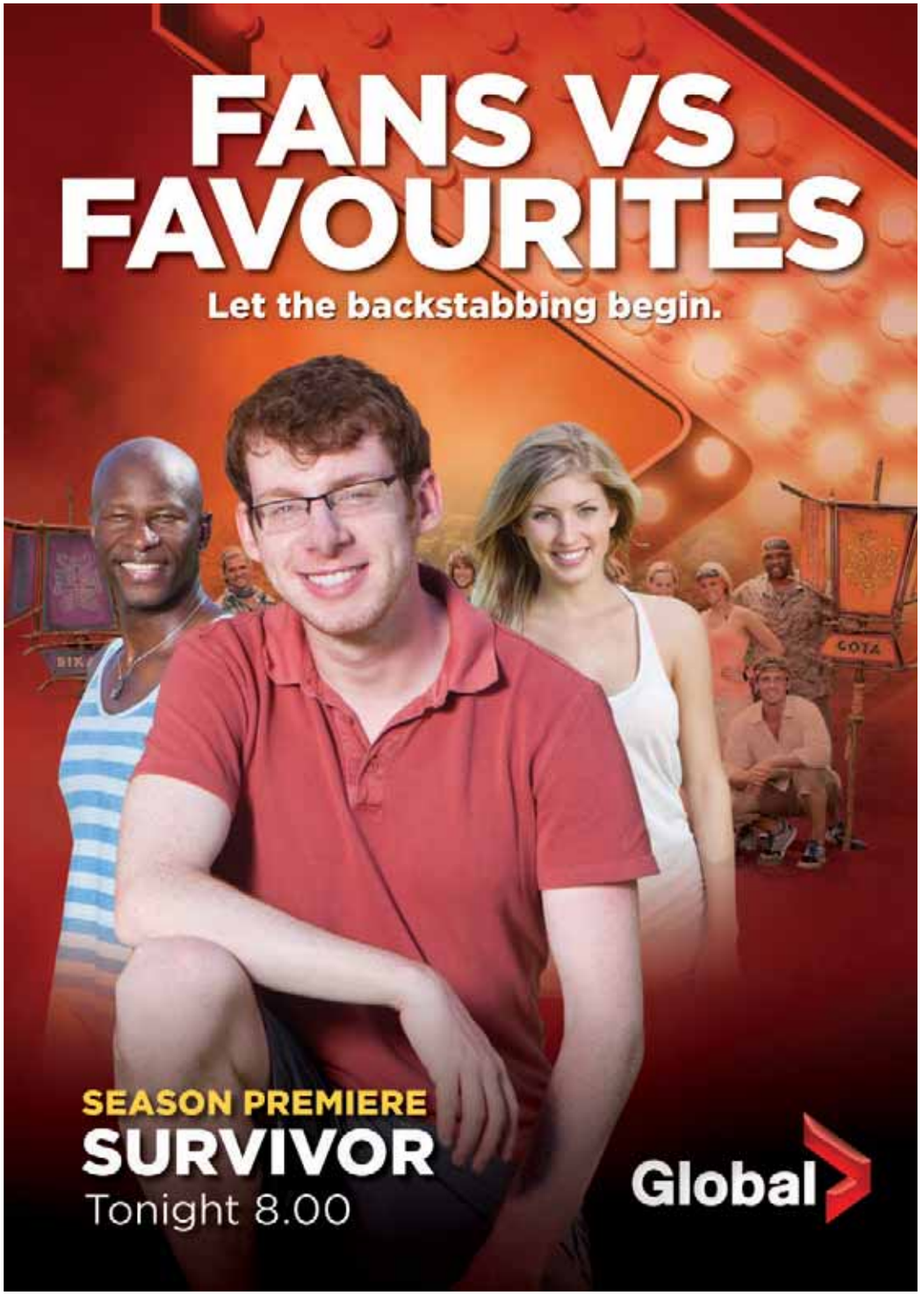
Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt
ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Vivienne Jolie-Pitt, the four-year-old daughter of Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt, is already earning some impressive cash. The toddler was reportedly paid $3,000 a week for a small role in her mom's upcoming film, Maleficent, according to contracts obtained by TMZ. The tot — whose twin brother, Knox, doesn't appear in the film — also received a per diem $60 for expenses each day she was on set. Older siblings Pax, 9, and Zahara, 8, also filmed cameos in the film, though it's unknown how much they earned.

Don't believe the rumours, Swift isn't chasing boys

Taylor Swift

Taylor Swift knows there are people out there talking about her love life, but she's doing her best to ignore it. "I'm sure if I looked up the latest Google alerts rumour it would say I'm chasing somebody who doesn't like me as much as I like him. People love that angle on me," Swift tells Elle magazine. "They're like, 'Oh Taylor, coming on too strong again, chasing boys.' I never chase boys. They don't like it!" And while her recent dig at ex Harry Styles at the Grammys might suggest otherwise, Swift insists she's not one to vent her anger. "I don't think I've ever yelled at an ex-boyfriend," she says. "Ever. I'm not a yeller. I'm not a fit-thrower. If something is done, it's done."



METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Meet Eau de Pizza Hut

THE WORD
Dorothy Robinson
scene@metronews.ca

Let's cut to the chase on this item: Pizza Hut has launched a promotional perfume called Eau de Pizza Hut.

The chain is giving away 24 bottles of the stuff. To get your own, send tweets to @PizzaHut with the hashtag "LastMinuteLovers." Each package also includes a $20 Pizza Hut gift card for Big Pizza Sliders or Lovers Pizza.

"The cologne has a slightly sweet base scent of freshly rising dough, but finishes decidedly savoury with hints of Italian spice like oregano, vine-ripened tomato sauce, the crispness of fresh-sliced vegetables and all wrapped by wafts of cheesy goodness," Ashlee Firsten of Aromachology, a custom perfumery in New York said in a press release.

"It's really a quite complex combination of aromas that results in the hunger-inducing smell of a fresh Pizza Hut pizza." It also helps if the sniffer is drunk.

Twitter

@msleamichele
Meetings, meetings, and mooooore meetings today!

@rosemcgowan
Just chipped my front tooth on a Charm pop. Oh, the irony. I look like I should be drinking moonshine.

@GarryShandling
I know how the Pope feels. It's exhausting.

@SteveMartinToGo
BREAKING NEWS: Donald Trump takes flattering photo.

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5 Free things to do in Puerto Rico

There may have been a time when Puerto Rico was a cheap getaway but those days are long gone. Puerto Rico is heavily dependent on imported goods and fuel and that's reflected in prices from a taxi ride from the airport to the mojito at your hotel. But there are, of course, some cheap options. There are also things to do that don't cost anything at all. Here are five of them.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ALL PHOTOS EXCEPT WHERE NOTED: THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beaches

There are plenty of beaches here — about 300 according to some estimates. In the capital, Isla Verde Beach is good for swimming and lolling on soft sand, groomed daily. Playita del Condado is a protected cove that is ideal for young kids and a surprisingly good place to snorkel for being in the middle of San Juan. Things get much better outside the capital. Crash Boat, about an hour west of San Juan, is great for swimming and snorkelling. Farther west in the west coast town of Rincon is Maria's, which has great surf.

El Yunque

About a half-hour drive from San Juan, thanks to a relatively new toll road, is an actual tropical rainforest, the only one that is part of the U.S. forest system. El Yunque National Forest is a cool oasis on a hot day. The well-maintained trails are often shrouded in misty clouds and you can cool off in a waterfall or a river pool along the relatively easy Big Tree Trail.

ANAIVETTE64/FLICKR

El Morro

There's an entrance fee to enter the Castillo San Felipe del Morro, but the best way to enjoy this U.S. National Historic Site requires no money at all. The fort that towers over San Juan Bay, known universally as just "El Morro," is a great place to stroll, especially at sunset. The massive rolling expanse of grass at the foot of the fort has spectacular views in any direction. It's a popular place to picnic and fly a kite, sold by nearby street vendors.

Old San Juan

At the foot of El Morro is the old city, the colonial heart of San Juan. In recent years, Old San Juan has been on an upswing. Its cobblestone streets are cleaner and livelier. New stores, restaurants and coffee shops have opened and many of the old homes have been restored. It's a working city, home to the governor's office and mansion — said to be the oldest in the western hemisphere — as well as other government offices and an increasing number of professional firms. It's also become an increasingly busy cruise ship port. Outlet and luxury goods shops have proliferated in response.

Music and Salsa

A good place to catch free live music several nights a week is the Plaza Mercado, a fruit and vegetable market in Santurce, a neighbourhood that is also home to what are considered some of the best restaurants in Puerto Rico. The lobby of the El San Juan in Isla Verde usually has live music and dancing on weekends. The bar of course isn't free but there's no charge to get in. The dancers can be intimidatingly good so the less-skilled may be content just to watch the scene. A number of restaurants and hotels also regularly advertise free salsa lessons.

CAMERA ON AUTOPILOT/FLICKR

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Falling in love with Marrakech

City of romance?
Moroccan destination's beauty and old-world charm make it the perfect place for a lover's escape

AURÉLIE RESCH
life@metronews.ca

Immerse yourself in the Moroccan way of life in Marrakech. SCOTT PRESLY/FLICKR

Marrakech — bustling hub of Moroccan tourism.

Not your idea of the perfect romantic destination?

The Riad Flam might change your perception.

Nestled in the very heart of the medina, Riad Flam boasts luxury and elegance behind its walls.

With only nine beautifully decorated bedrooms embracing a lovely patio with a fountain, this is the place to experience intimacy in a refined environment.

Dim lights, marble floor, four-poster bed and wooden furniture are your first step to your thousand-and-one nights romantic getaway.

The silence of the place will pleasantly surprise you as you return from shopping in the souks or markets. Slowly the mix of sounds you brought back from the Jemâa-El-Fna Plaza will dissolve in the faint murmur of the patio fountain. Any fatigue from your exploration of historic Marrakech will melt away while you unwind in your private hammam, or Turkish bath. Flam, the Riad's female owner, will perform the traditional hammam treatment that will leave you relaxed, rejuvenated and ready to taste local delicacies.

The choice is yours: eating on the terrace under a sky bright with stars or in the oriental-style living room. Local cuisine includes lamb tajines, vegetarian couscous, Moroccan salads, cinnamon and spices, dates and oranges.

Ready to embrace the day as the sun rises? Opt for a hot air balloon adventure before dawn and admire sunrise on the desert.

Ask Abdelai at the front desk to make arrangements with Maroc Montgolfière for this amazing three-hour experience.

If living the Arabic way of life is what you are looking for, get lost in the maze of souks and make your way back to Jemâa-El-Fna Plaza for sunset. From the rooftop of Café Glacier you will enjoy an unparalleled view of the famous Plaza and the city as the amber light colours the red facades of the houses.

As the day turns into night, the call for prayer will resonate in the entire city and the Jemâa-El-Fna Plaza will come to life with snake charmers, salesmen, acrobats and jugglers.

It won't be long until you surrender to the flurry of activity.

Back to your Riad nest, gazing at the stars, you will engrave the moment in your memory forever, happy you chose enchanting Morocco for your Valentine's Day.

If you go...

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Travel tips

Winter dreaming? Go west...

ON THE MOVE
Loren Christie
life@metronews.ca

British Columbia is heaven for winter sports enthusiasts. Here are a few ski destinations worth experiencing.

Kicking Horse Mountain Resort is situated in Golden along B.C.'s Powder Highway, a route linking together eight mountain resorts. With its four Alpine Bowls and the fourth highest vertical drop in Canada, Kicking Horse has a reputation as the place for "hard core skiers." With no village and a handful of slope side services, this resort is indeed for people whose primary interest is hitting the slopes. However, the mountain boasts runs suited to all levels. From your bar stool in the Eagle's Eye Restaurant at the summit, enjoy an incredible view of five of the National Parks surrounding the resort.

Cat skiing at the Island Lake Mountain Resort outside of Fernie is the epitome of backcountry luxury. Your day starts with avalanche survival training and then you are off with a packed lunch as you search for untouched alpine bowls and gorgeous glades via a Caterpillar.

A one-hour drive from Kelowna International Airport, Silver Star Mountain Resort is designed for Alpine and Nordic skiers, snowshoers and snowmobilers to share. The My1Pass includes lift tickets and unlimited access to all Nordic trails, snowshoe trails, the Tube Town Adventure Park and ice skating at Brewer's Pond.

It's been called — sometimes derisively — a collection of 72 suburbs in search of a city. Still, there's a lot of stuff to see and do inside those 72 suburbs that are said to comprise Los Angeles, a place that at 2,214 square kilometres is big enough to hold all of New York's five boroughs with enough room left over for San Francisco.

PHOTOS AND STORY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

What to do in the city of angels

Hollywood

The intersection of Hollywood and Highland is the crossroads for the Hollywood Walk of Fame, where more than 2,400 terrazzo-and-brass stars containing the biggest names in the entertainment business can be viewed by just walking down the sidewalk. You'll find everyone from Clark Gable to Johnny Depp, Marilyn Monroe to Meryl Streep. You can also gaze upon a lot of people in that neighbourhood who are dressed up to look just like some of the stars, especially Marilyn. But if you take their pictures they'll want money, so stop by instead at the courtyard to the famous Chinese Theater. There you'll find the stars' names and their hand and footprints, immortalized in concrete. There's everyone from Mary Pickford, who left her prints in 1927, to Robert De Niro, who put his there Feb. 4.

Downtown

This place once defined LA's reputation as a city without a core. But no more. It has undergone a revival in recent years, adding upscale condos, chichi bars and the iconic, Frank Gehry-designed Walt Disney Concert Hall. The area to visit for the cool free stuff, though, is on the north side of the Hollywood Freeway, home to the historic El Pueblo de Los Angeles, where the city was founded in 1781. There you'll see many of its oldest and most beautiful buildings restored to their previous grandeur. LA's oldest existing house, the Avila Adobe, built in 1818, is located on colourful Olvera Street and offers free tours. A couple blocks away is Union Station, renowned for both its beauty and distinctive fusion of Spanish Colonial and Art Deco architecture when it opened in 1939.

Venice Beach

Arguably the best free people-watching venue anywhere west of New York's Times Square and with the added bonus that it never gets really cold here. An afternoon stroll down the 2.4-kilometre Ocean Front Walk will take people past one of the most colourful collections of skateboarders, street artists, fortune tellers, jugglers, mimes, acrobats, unicycle riders, actors, dancers, musicians, street preachers and armchair philosophers found anywhere in the United States.

Nethercutt Museum & Collection

One of the city's best kept secrets, even to its residents. This free museum is located in Sylmar, a neighbourhood of modest, 1950s-era homes in the farthest northeast corner of the city's San Fernando Valley, where thousands of olive trees once stood. Inside are more than 250 beautifully restored, classic automobiles dating to the 1800s. Outside is a fully restored steam locomotive and 1912 Pullman passenger car that visitors may walk through. The collection also includes antique clocks, watches and musical instruments. If you must visit The Valley, as locals call it, this is likely the best free thing to see there.

Griffith Park

With more than 80 kilometres of free hiking trails, Griffith Park bills itself as the largest urban wilderness in the U.S. The Griffith Observatory offers nighttime visitors a chance to check out the moon and stars.

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Tonight is the perfect time for date night, don't you agree?

Perfect with a glass of wine and a wedge of your favourite cheese, these crackers containing Medjool dates are a great savoury treat with a hint of sweetness.

Medjool dates, which have been called the "king of dates," are semi-soft and exceptionally large. They're carried year-round by major and mid-sized grocery chains across Canada.

1. Heat oven to 160 C (325 F). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

2. In a food processor, pulse pistachios until finely chopped. Add 125 ml (1/2 cup) of the flour and dates. Pulse until mixture resembles fine bread crumbs. Add olives and pulse until mixed. Add remaining flour, orange zest, salt, baking powder and pepper. Pulse until well mixed.

3. In a small bowl, whisk egg and set aside 15 ml (1 tbsp) of the beaten egg for glazing. Add remaining egg and olive oil to food processor. Pulse until mixture comes together.

4. Turn dough out onto lightly floured board and knead gently. Flatten into a disc and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate until firm, 1 hour.

Ingredients

- 50 ml (1/4 cup) pistachios, shelled
- 250 ml (1 cup) all-purpose flour, divided
- 125 ml (1/2 cup) Medjool dates, pitted and chopped (5 to 6 dates)
- 50 ml (1/4 cup) kalamata olives, pitted and chopped
- 5 ml (1 tsp) orange zest
- 1 ml (1/4 tsp) salt
- 0.5 ml (1/8 tsp) baking powder
- 0.5 ml (1/8 tsp) black pepper
- 1 egg
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) olive oil

Medjool Date, Nut and Olive Crackers

This recipe makes about 12 crackers. THE CANADIAN PRESS H/O

5. Using lightly floured rolling pin, roll dough 5 mm (1/4 inch) thick. Cut into 6-cm (2 1/2-inch) rounds. Place on a prepared baking sheet. Brush tops with remaining beaten egg. Bake in centre of oven until golden brown, 22 mins.

6. Let cool on a rack. Store in an airtight container up to 3 days. **THE CANADIAN PRESS/ NATURAL DELIGHTS MEDJOOL DATES**

Drink of the Week

Amore Martini

There's just something seductive about a martini. Show your guests and sweethearts alike that you love them with this Amore Martini.

The sweetness of the passion fruit and the sour twist of lemon will ensure an ideal balance of flavour.

- 2 oz Campari
- 1 oz SKYY Vodka
- 0.5 oz Passion fruit liqueur
- Dash of fresh lemon juice

Mix Campari, SKYY Vodka, passion fruit liqueur and dash of fresh lemon juice in a shaker filled with ice.

Shake and serve in a cocktail glass.

RECIPE AND PHOTO COURTESY OF SKYY VODKA

Dessert. Vanilla Date Balls

1. Line a baking sheet with parchment or wax paper and set aside.

2. In a small saucepan, combine dates, orange juice, butter and brown sugar. Bring to a simmer over medium heat and cook, stirring, for about 12 minutes or until very soft and thickened. Stir in vanilla; set aside to cool completely.

3. Stir in cookie crumbs and coconut until well combined. Place sugar on a plate or in a shallow bowl. Using rounded 5-ml (1-tsp) measuring spoon, scoop out mixture and roll into ball.

4. Roll ball in sugar until completely coated and place on prepared baking sheet. Repeat with remaining mixture.

Ingredients

- 250 ml (1 cup) Medjool dates, pitted and chopped
- 125 ml (1/2 cup) orange juice
- 50 ml (1/4 cup) butter
- 50 ml (1/4 cup) packed brown sugar
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) pure vanilla extract
- 375 ml (1 1/2 cups) chocolate cookie crumbs
- 125 ml (1/2 cup) sweetened flaked coconut
- 150 ml (2/3 cup) granulated sugar, for rolling

5. Place in refrigerator for at least 2 hours or until set and firm. Package in single layers in airtight container or cookie tins and keep refrigerated for up to 3 weeks. **THE CANADIAN PRESS/NATURAL DELIGHTS MEDJOOL DATES**

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Information will be collected in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. With the exception of personal information, all comments will become part of the public record. Contest ends March 11, 2013. Enter the contest at www.feelingcongested.ca or by attending one of the public consultation events (see full contest rules for details). No purchase necessary. Open to all legal residents of the Greater Toronto Area over the age of majority. Odds of winning dependent on number of entries received. Entrants must answer a skill-testing question. Full contest rules available at www.feelingcongested.ca.

Aboriginal engagement. Help bridge cultural gaps with this career choice

Each day, Canadian natural resource companies contend with the challenges of maximizing growth and economic potential from land. And as the fastest growing and youngest segment of Canada's population, First Nations, Métis and Inuit people are becoming exponentially more active in making their mark, not just culturally, but in the realm of business and industry as well.

Communication and language skills are crucial to building trust and friendship with Aboriginal communities. ISTOCK

What does an Aboriginal liaison officer do?

It's expected that First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities will play increasingly relevant roles in mining and energy-related industries in the coming years. Creating and sustaining the natural partnerships that resource companies have with Aboriginal communities is the top priority of ALOs, and it's their job to ensure an environment of harmony, trust and respect for all parties involved.

Also known as community affairs managers, community liaisons or Aboriginal engagement officers, ALOs are the primary points of communication between groups. Unlike conventional spokespersons, they speak on behalf of everyone involved, with the goal of bridging cultural gaps and establishing common understanding through conflict resolution. Government organizations also sometimes hire ALOs.

What qualities does an ALO need to have?

As an ALO, you should have a knack for diplomacy and know how to diffuse tense situations without losing sight of the prize. It also helps to have a keen sense of intuition and fair play, as ALOs must often deal with highly emotional issues and should be level-headed enough to steer a heated discussion back to its relevant points.

JELEEN YU FOR TALENTEGG.CA

Why become an ALO?

When you consider that the task of sustaining harmony among multiple communities rests largely on your shoulders, it's clear that the job demands much more than just the average effort.

- ALOs find fulfilment in helping others discover how to break cultural boundaries and develop mutual respect. They interact with various personalities and learn to tackle a wide range of issues, from corporate and legal to societal and historical. Conflict is common, but you'll have the satisfaction of being part of the team that finds its resolution.

Find your footing with help from friends

Centre yourself.

Reap the rewards that come from using on-campus resources

TUEN MUN ONG
TalentEgg.ca

While many Aboriginal people reside in major cities today, there are still a significant number of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students who come from small, remote communities to attend college or university.

If they hope to successfully adjust to life in a larger city and maybe one day start their career there, it's important for these students — many of whom may be the first in their family to pursue post-secondary education — to build their networks starting from day one.

Career centres are there to help students find their way into the workforce, the next stage in their lives. ISTOCK

Take advantage of Aboriginal service and career centres

A number of universities have specialized career centres and services for their Aboriginal students. At the University of Regina's Aboriginal Career Centre, for instance, students can benefit from educational and career planning services, partnerships with local employers and the Aboriginal community and internship programs.

The University of Alberta's Aboriginal Student Services Centre (ASSC) is another example. Students have access to a range of programs and services at the ASSC: connections to Aboriginal traditions and culture, elder services, guidance, emotional support, funding for tutoring and workshops and volunteer opportunities.

"It comes down to the networking and connections," says Shana Dion, director at the ASSC. "A lot of the connections they have might be from back home and not from the urban setting. If we don't choose to go back home, what are other options?"

Meeting mentors

"A lot of the connections they have might be from back home and not from the urban setting. If we don't choose to go back home, what are other options?"

Shana Dion
Director at the University of Alberta's Aboriginal Student Services Centre

Know you're an asset

Many employers want new hires who come with relevant experience. While this is true, Dion says there are those who are willing to work with students who might not have that experience.

She advises Aboriginal students who are currently making the school-to-work transition to believe in themselves and know that they are of value to organizations.

"Somebody might not come with connections to so many communities, understanding protocols, knowing who elders are, knowing who community members are in certain areas where an industry might need to connect," Dion explains. "So if a student is from a certain area and chooses to work with a certain industry leader, maybe that industry leader works with that community. You have a connection already with that community. That's an asset. You know what I mean? They don't have to build that."

It's important to acknowledge that each person comes with unique past experiences, journeys, knowledge, skills and relationships which can be a benefit to any organization, says Dion.

TALENTEGG.CA IS CANADA'S LEADING JOB SITE AND ONLINE CAREER RESOURCE FOR COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AND RECENT GRADUATES.

Teach the tough and the true

Prioritizing the past. Why Indigenous studies classes are more important today than ever before

DANIELLE LORENZ
TalentEgg.ca

With the critical thinking and writing skills that Indigenous studies programs foster, Mallory Whiteduck says that graduates should be able to expect jobs in areas similar to others with bachelor of arts degrees. ISTOCK

With all that is being publicized in the media in respect to Idle No More, it's essential to understand the importance of enrolling in Indigenous studies classes. I asked Mallory Whiteduck — whom I met while I was studying at Carleton University — for her perspective.

Originally from Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg, Whiteduck completed her bachelor's degree in communications at the University of Ottawa and then went on to do her master's degree in Canadian studies at Carleton University. For two years she worked as a researcher at the Native Women's Association of Canada, in their Sisters in Spirit initiative. Whiteduck has been working with Carleton University's Centre for Aboriginal Culture and Education (CACE) since 2010.

What is your role as an Aboriginal cultural liaison officer?

In the very broadest sense, my role here is to help to "Indigenize" the university. Our office has helped to create systemic change at the university, for example by contributing to Carleton's Aboriginal Coordinated Strategy, which was approved by the University Senate.

Another big part of my job is working with youth on the ground. I travel across Ontario and parts of Quebec, visiting Aboriginal youth on and off-territory, and in communities and urban areas, to promote post-secondary education and opportunities for Aboriginal students at Carleton.

What kinds of skills can be gained in Aboriginal studies programs that cannot be gained in other academic disciplines?

Learning how to think critically is an important skill that is taught in Indigenous studies programs.

When Aboriginal history is added to the Canadian narrative — which sometimes only happens for students when they reach college or university, or never — it becomes a richer story and it becomes a story that is complicated, negative and not necessarily one that Canada should be proud of as a nation.

We can't eliminate Canada's history of colonization from our identity simply because it's not a pretty story. To do that would be denying Canadian children the opportunity to truly understand their Anishinaabe, Inuit, Onkwehonwe, Métis and other Indigenous friends and neighbours. Being able to think critically about Canada and its relationship with Aboriginal peoples will provide Indigenous studies graduates with a deeper understanding of where they are from.

Student voice

On facing a fork in the internship road

Courtney Hardwick
Graduate
Bachelor of arts in English Language and Literature
University of Windsor

TalentEgg.ca

I always knew a BA in English wasn't going to make it easy to get a job, but I thought having a university degree would at least count for something. Turns out, not so much. I ended up going back to school and just recently finished a post-grad publishing program at Ryerson.

Even though I have focused in on the industry I want to work in, it has still been next to impossible to find a job. I have done two internships at publishing companies and although they were both amazing experiences, they don't seem to count for much either. I had one interview for an internship where they told me straight up that my time there would not lead to a job, so I shouldn't have any kind of expectations regarding that.

Now, I understand they are only telling me to be realistic, but it is still discouraging to hear that at an interview and it is depressing to think that all I will ever be able to find are an endless string of internships that pay next to nothing.

I am at a roadblock. Do I continue to do internships and hope eventually one will pay off? Or do I look for work elsewhere, just so I can make some money and actually start paying back that student loan that's lurking just past another six-month repayment assistance term?

What I'm doing now

I received a post-graduate certificate and it helped me get internships, but that's still not enough. I have done some volunteering as well. To pay the rent, I work in retail and I can't wait until the day I can quit and never look back.

My advice for other students and recent graduates

Anything you can do to get practical experience while you don't have to worry about rent/paying back student loans/bills, do it!

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Toronto Blue Jays outfielder Jose Bautista looks on during batting practice in Dunedin, Fla., on Tuesday. Though there is added pressure on the team this year, Bautista is handling it with utter confidence. RICK MADONIK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

World Series on Joey Bats's mind

MLB. Two years after signing deal and being reassured of the Jays' direction, Bautista is leader of 'a contender'

"The sky's the limit."

Jose Bautista isn't given to mixing words or their meanings, at least not when it comes to assessing the Toronto Blue Jays and the chances for a playoff berth for the vastly retooled roster.

So when the two-time major-league home-run king lends phrases like "the sky's the limit," there's a definite weight to them, even though optimism is high in virtually every major-league city at this time of year.

"I know I've been on other teams and one that didn't have a chance (to be in the playoffs), but this is different, this is the best team I've been on in my career.... I don't see where it can go wrong for us," Bautista said Tuesday when pitchers and catchers were undergoing physicals in advance of Wednesday's first official reporting date for spring training.

Bautista's enthusiasm was buoyed by the massive, off-season retooling of the Jays that brought on proven major leaguers like pitchers R.A. Dickey, Josh Johnson, and Mark Buehrle, as well as infielder Jose Reyes and outfield Melky Cabrera.

"If we do what we are all capable of, then it should come together for us, it will take care of itself," Bautista said. "We should be able to go to the playoffs and hopefully the World Series."

Bautista stood two years ago in the same place at the Flora Auto Exchange Stadium in Dunedin, having just signed a five-year contract extension. That new deal signalled the beginning of a change in responsibility for Bautista, who became the Jays focal player back then, and is living up to that role now.

"When I first signed that deal I wasn't just counting on the young players to come through," said Bautista, who didn't sign the deal before gaining some measure of assurance from management regarding the club's direction.

"I was counting on Alex (GM Anthopoulos) building a contender that could compete in a sustainable way for years to come. And he (Anthopoulos) came through on his words."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Comeback trail

Bautista was limited to 92 games in 2012 because of a wrist injury that ultimately led to off-season surgery.

- "I've gone through the rehab and I can tell you it was tedious but I worked my butt off in the gym and now I'm ready to get back on the field," he said.

CFL

Argos dip into free agent market

Ricky Foley wants to return to the Toronto Argonauts, and the free-agent defensive end says he offered to take a pay cut.

His future with the Grey Cup champions remains unclear, however, with the CFL free-agent market set to open Friday at noon. Foley, running back Chad Kackert and defensive back Evan McCollough are all eligible.

"Obviously, I want to stay with the Argos and play in my hometown, but this is a cold-hearted business and it's no longer up to me if I come back," said Foley, 30. "I haven't asked for a pay raise. I actually offered to take a pay cut to stay an Argo."

GM Jim Barker, dealing with a $4.35-million salary cap, signed his first big free agent on Tuesday — former Calgary receiver Romby Bryant. In five seasons, three with the Stamps and two with Winnipeg, the 33-year-old caught 210 passes for 3,025 yards and 22 touchdowns. Last season he had 55 receptions for 678 yards and two scores.

"He's also a great special-teams player and blocks well," Barker said. "He's a top-end speed guy."

"Every receiver who has ever played in the CFL would be lying if they said they never thought about playing with (Argo QB Ricky) Ray," Bryant said in a release.

Also unsigned are linebacker Tristan Black, offensive lineman Cedric Gagne-Marcoux and receiver Maurice Mann, whose future is affected by the Bryant signing.

"There are certain players who you think will fit your team that you will overpay for," Barker said. "We'll see what happens."

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Chopping block. Local coaches urge young wrestlers to keep fighting

Thinking about how wrestling is on the IOC's chopping block is like getting a kick in the stomach for Lonnie Ritchey — he says he feels like he's on his knees, hunched over, hoping to get his wind back.

"It'll take the wind out of wrestling for a little bit, but we're a resilient bunch," said Ritchey, who coached at Oshawa Central Collegiate Institute for 26 years, until the school shut down the wrestling program this fall.

The IOC executive board announced on Tuesday it is recommending freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestling be dropped from the Olympic program. The decision is set to be ratified by the IOC in May.

Ritchey said he'd encourage young wrestlers not to focus on the IOC's decision.

"Nothing good can come from looking at it too long and too hard. It's just another decision made in a boardroom. There's a lot of decisions made in boardrooms that don't reflect well on the little people," he said. "I'd direct them back into wrestling. Go to your local club and seek out sponsorship and continue to wrestle.

Jay Jordon, president of Team Impact Wrestling Club and head coach at Neil McNeil Catholic High School, said the Olympics are now considered the pinnacle of the sport. Former Olympian Khetag Pliev works with the club and gives the kids inspiration.

"All the kids greatly admire Khetag Pliev," he said.

If the IOC decision is upheld, he'll have the kids to focus on other international competitions.

JESSICA SMITH/METRO

NHL

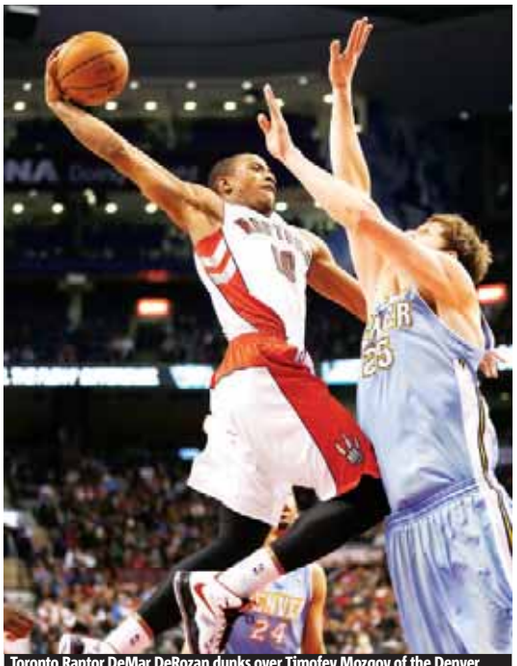
Reimer out at least a week

Toronto Maple Leafs goaltender James Reimer is expected to be sidelined at least a week with a strained knee ligament.

Reimer suffered the injury during the second period of Toronto's 5-2 victory over the visiting Philadelphia Flyers on Monday.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Raptors knock off Nuggets with late jumper from Gay



Toronto Raptor DeMar DeRozan dunks over Timofey Mozgov of the Denver Nuggets at the Air Canada Centre on Tuesday. STEVE RUSSELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

NBA. DeRozan leads Toronto to victory with 22 points in a tightly contested matchup

DeMar DeRozan had 22 points and John Lucas had 12 of his 14 points in the fourth quarter as the Toronto Raptors won their third straight by defeating the short-handed Denver Nuggets 109-108 on Tuesday night.

Rudy Gay, plagued by foul trouble, finished with 17 points but hit the go-ahead shot in the final minute of the game. He had led the Raptors in scoring with 20 or more points in five games since coming over in a trade with Memphis.

Alan Anderson had 10 points while Kyle Lowry added 11 points and 10 assists for Toronto (20-32).

Ty Lawson paced Denver (33-20) with 29 points and nine assists. The Nuggets lost their second straight after having their nine-game win streak snapped Sunday with a 118-114 triple overtime loss in Boston to the Celtics.

Lucas, who scored 10 points in the fourth quarter in Sunday's win over New Orleans, went to work from downtown early in the final quarter, jacking up three straight threes to give Toronto a 91-83 cushion. After Denver pulled back within two, Lucas hit another three before dishing to Anderson, who dropped in a long ball to make it 100-94 with five minutes left.

Lawson's six points in the paint and a reverse layup from Corey Brewer rallied Denver and the game was tied 102-102 with just under three minutes to play.

With just over a minute left to play and Toronto holding a slim one-point lead, Denver stopped Gay on a drive before drawing a foul at the other end. Anthony Randolph converted to put the Nuggets in front by one, but with the final possession Gay hit a clutch jumper from the wing and the arena erupted with 4.8 seconds left.

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Findings on the new Forester

Review. Subaru's wonder wagon adds refinement plus a more satisfying right-foot workout.

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ALL PHOTOS WHEELBASE

You would think that after 15 years and three generations of Forester that Subaru would have concocted the ideal formula for its tallest tall wagon.

Actually this car-based conveyance has contained mostly all the right ingredients ever since its 1998-model-year launch and the fourth generation model arriving this spring is dishing up more of the same.

Through clockwork-regular updating, the Forester has evolved into a steady performer that treats its passengers well and totes their belongings with ease. On good roads and bad, the standard all-wheel-drive operates virtually unnoticed. But when the need arises, which is frequently in snow-belt regions, the vehicle's mountain-goat capabilities make it a popular choice.

The 2014 Forester's bolder, brawnier styling displays more curves and angles than before. The blacked-out lower body cladding featured on all models ties in nicely with the more expressive mesh-style grille, flat-black bumper and attractively shaped side air intakes featured on up-level turbo models. (Subaru has also eliminated the turbo's obtrusive hood scoop that was part of its standard kit.)

The Forester sits on a new platform that modestly stretches the distance between the front and rear wheels. That translates into a bit more rear legroom (up-level trims add a reclining rear seat), but a taller roofline and lower load floor adds about 10 per cent more cargo volume with the split-folding rear seat folded flat.

The cabin's more formal control-panel layout is trimmed in satin nickel and optional leather. Subaru's designers also increased the distance between the front seats and the dash to create a greater sense of spaciousness.

The Forester's only significant carryover item is the 2.5-litre four-cylinder engine (installed in 2.5i models) that generates 170 horsepower and 174 pound-feet of torque. For added punch, the 2.0XT uses a turbocharged version of the 2.0-litre four-cylinder in the BRZ sports coupe. Rated at 250 horsepower and 258 pound-feet of torque, it replaces the previous 2.5-litre turbo engine option that produced 224 horsepower and 226 pound-feet. The engine, which apparently won't fit into the BRZ, does show potential, however, for a future application.

Updating the Forester's underpinnings was also on Subaru's radar. This included specific retuning the front and rear suspension for the base and turbo models and installing larger brakes for the latter. Electric power steering replaces the less-efficient hydraulic unit to help curb fuel consumption.

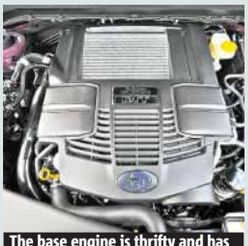
The Forester's admirers likely won't be disappointed with this latest iteration's crisp styling, added performance and improved fuel efficiency. For those reasons, this Forester is one notch closer to perfection.

2014 Subaru Forester

- **Type.** Four-door, all-wheel-drive compact wagon
- **Engine (hp).** 2.4-litre DOHC H4 (170); 2.0-litre DOHC H4, turbocharged (250)
- **Transmissions.** Six-speed manual; continuously variable with opt. paddle shifters
- **Base price (incl. destination).** $28,550

Fuel economy

The 2.5 is estimated at 9.5 l/100 km in the city and 7.4 on the highway with the CVT, while the 2.0XT's estimate is 10.2/8.4. These values improve on the previous-generation's base and optional power trains.



The base engine is thrifty and has enough power for most situations. The turbo option is our choice.

Transmission

The 2.5i offers a six-speed manual transmission, or a continuously variable (CVT) option. The 2.0XT only comes with the CVT, but it comes with what Subaru calls its "engine performance management system" with Intelligent, Sport and Sport Sharp settings.

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Meet the upholstery man

Autoknow. Your engine konks out, the dealership fixes it. There's a noise under the car, the dealership fixes it. You tear a seat — uh oh.

JOE KNYCHA
wheelbasemedia.com

Collin Hoyt doesn't work for a car company. He toils away in a small one-bay shop on the East Coast with the hum of florescent lights competing with the local FM station.

On a cluttered work bench the size of several pool tables, he executes his own interior repairs without computers, millions of dollars, or, perhaps most importantly, focus groups. What he sees in his head turns into the final product.

And chances are that if the inside of your shiny new Mustang eventually needs some help, whether it be fixing a tear, replacing the carpets, or installing a new convertible top, Hoyt, or someone like him, will be on the other end of the phone with you instead of the local dealership.

He's a rare breed of automotive enthusiast who sees all the little things that most of us would look past: crooked seams, puckered edges, inferior finish and attention to fit. It's the kind of care and attention that appears to match the new approach by domestic automakers. But Hoyt doesn't need a hot-shot Detroit designer to spell out what's important. In fact, Hoyt is much more direct.

"An interior makes the car. Would you redo your home and forget about the furniture inside?"

Hoyt performs full-on custom work and even tricky jobs such as blending modern features with old cars.

But who's on the other end of that ringing phone? People with shiny new cars looking for one thing. "Repairs."

In fact, Hoyt says that repair work is a whole other category of the automotive upholstery trade. It's a common call.

"I tore a hole in the seat of my new car with a screwdriver. Now what?"

That, and worn out panels that show the age of the vehicle even when the exterior still looks brand new. And of course there are the usual seam repairs. There are no real miracle fixes here. According to Hoyt, you just have to take the seat apart and replace the offending pieces.

"Not everyone knows this can be done. They just live with it or think it's too much of a pain to bother."

Sometimes they just don't know where to turn.

"There's a body shop on every corner, but you usually have to dig around to find not just an upholsterer, but an automotive upholsterer, an enthusiast who respects their craft."

That will mean a quality repair that begins with the right materials.

"We can get matching cloth or leather from the manufacturer. The more exotic, the harder it is to get and the more expensive it is." Sometimes the material can cost more than the repair itself.

In terms of time, Hoyt says that screwdriver hole will take about two to four hours and you're back on the road in a day.

"And it's done right."

The labour part includes taking apart the seat, removing the damaged piece, sewing in the new piece and reassembling the seat.

And what about those side bolsters that become cracked and worn out over time?

"You'll want to replace as many panels as necessary to get the seat looking like the new areas match the old ones. Count on about six hours of work."

Unfortunately, that's all the time Hoyt has for us today. He's anxious to get back to stitching, foaming ... and tending to a burn he just received from a welder.

"That one's pretty deep. It still stings, but just wait until you see the car when it's finished. It's gonna be awesome."

Friend him

Do you have interior issues or questions? You can send a message or make a friend request to Hoyt on Facebook by searching Collin Hoyt.

This 1965 Mustang does not use a pre-made upholstery kit as the seats were reshaped with foam for more support. As such, all the panels were patterned by hand, cut with scissors and sewn, very carefully, by upholsterer Collin Hoyt. ALL PHOTOS WHEELBASE MEDIA

Collin Hoyt corrects the door-panel gap on a 1965 Mustang. Hoyt says he likes to apply modern fit standards to old vehicles, but that takes extra time and patience. And that takes money that people sometimes have a hard time parting with.

American automakers catch on

Look at an Audi or BMW. Comfy, sophisticated, highly detailed and tailored. They feel great and they fit.

- However, American automakers, which have lagged far behind the likes of Audi, finally see the space where we spend most of our time — the interior — as sacred ground worthy of some real effort. You just have to look at the guts of the modern Ford Mustang to see the difference.
- "The success of the interior was dependent on our attention to detail," said Mustang Design Manager Gary Morales. "There is no room for error. We were entrusted with a globally recognized icon."
- Another Ford interior design manager, Robert Gelardi, said, "Gaps between parts — the chrome ringed air registers, for example, are accurate to within fractions of millimetres. We were absolute maniacs about the selection of materials and executing every detail."

As interior design quality ratchets up, so will the need for high-quality repairs to match. Who will make them?

Maintenance tips

Ounce of prevention keeps interiors tip top

Hoyt recommends using plain ingredients to care for the inside of your car.

Of course, taking better care of your interior surfaces is one way of altogether avoiding a visit with an upholsterer. But there's nothing fancy when it comes to cleaning and "feeding" your interior. "I would recommend nothing harsher than what you would use on yourself. If you wouldn't put it on your face, I wouldn't put it on leather."

Hoyt suggests looking for products with more natural ingredients such as mink oil and lanolin.

The number one protection for keeping a shiny new Mustang looking shiny new, he says, is to block out the sun, either with tinted windows, portable windscreen shades or by regularly parking the vehicle in a garage.

"The sun is the killer, whether it's cooking the interior with heat or from the ultraviolet rays."

One area most affected is the dashpad, which is often made of plastic and spends the most time in direct sunlight. Hoyt recommends using mild soap and water to clean and then suggests to sparingly apply a protectant that deflects the sun's upholstery-killing rays.

"Dashtop replacement is usually the best option for the best results, but a repair, which is less expensive and not always perfect, might hold you over."

JOE KNYCHA IS A WRITER WITH WHEELBASE MEDIA. YOU CAN MESSAGE HIM USING THE CONTACT FORM AT WHEELBASEMEDIA.COM. WHEELBASE MEDIA IS A WORLDWIDE PROVIDER OF AUTOMOTIVE NEWS AND FEATURES STORIES.

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HONDA

*No payments for 90 days (payment deferral) offer is available on all new 2013 Honda models financed between February 1st, 2013 and February 28th, 2013 at participating Ontario Honda Dealers. Offer applies only to purchase finance offers on approved credit through Honda Financial Services Inc. Monthly payments are deferred for 90 days. Contracts will be extended accordingly. Interest charges will not accrue during the first 60 days of the contract. After 60 days, interest starts to accrue and the purchaser will be required to repay the principal and interest monthly over the term of the contract, but not until 90 days after the contract date. Offer ends February 28th, 2013 and is subject to change or cancellation without notice. Ω Limited time lease offers on any new 2013 Honda Odyssey LX (Model RL5H2DE) // 2013 Honda Pilot LX 2WD (Model YF3H2DE) models available through Honda Financial Services Inc., on approved credit. Representative lease example: based on a 2013 Honda Pilot LX 2WD (Model YF3H2DE) on a 24 month term at 0.99% lease APR, the monthly payment is $709.54 [includes $1,640 freight and PDI, EHF tires ($29), EHF filters ($1), A/C tax ($100), and OMVIC fee ($5)] with $0 down payment or equivalent trade-in, $0 security deposit and first monthly payment due at lease inception. Total lease obligation is $17,028.96. 48,000-kilometre allowance; charge of $0.12/km for excess kilometres. †Receive 0.99% purchase financing on any new 2013 Honda Accord Sedan and Coupe // 2013 Honda Crosstour // 2013 Honda CR-V LX 2WD (Model RM3H3DES) // 2013 Honda Pilot LX 2WD (Model YF3H2DE) // 2013 Honda Odyssey LX (Model RL5H2DE) // 2013 Honda Ridgeline models for a maximum of 24 // 24 // 24 // 36 // 24 months available through Honda Financial Services Inc., on approved credit. Representative Finance example: based on a 2013 Honda Accord Sport Sedan (Model CR2E5DE) // 2013 Honda Pilot LX 2WD (Model YF3H2DE) on a 24 // 36 month term at 0.99% // 0.99% APR, complete price of $27,265 // $36,765 [includes $1,640 freight and PDI, EHF tires ($29), EHF filters ($1), A/C tax ($100), and OMVIC fee ($5). Excludes taxes, license, insurance, and registration]. Cost of borrowing is $281.96 // $563.76 for a total finance obligation of $27,546.96 // $37,328.76. Down payment or equivalent trade-in on purchase financing offers may be required based on approved credit from Honda Financial Services Inc. **$2,000 // $2,000 // $1,000 // $500 customer cash incentive is valid on any new 2013 Honda Odyssey except Odyssey LX (Model RL5H2DE) // 2013 Honda Pilot except Pilot LX 2WD (Model YF3H2DE) // 2013 Honda CR-V except CR-V LX 2WD (Model RM3H3DES) // 2013 Honda Fit except Fit DX 5MT (Model GE8G2DEX) models when registered and delivered between February 1st and February 28th, 2013. Cash incentive is available for all Honda retail customers except customers who lease or finance through Honda Financial Services Inc. at a subvented rate of interest offered by Honda as part of a low rate interest program. All advertised lease and finance rates are special rates. Cash incentive will be deducted from the negotiated price before taxes. For all offers: license, insurance, PPSA, and other taxes (including HST) are extra. Taxes payable on full amount of purchase price. Offers only valid for Ontario residents at Ontario Honda Dealers. Dealer may sell/lease for less. Dealer order/trade may be necessary. Vehicles and accessories are for illustration purposes only. Offers subject to change without notice. See your Ontario Honda Dealer or visit HondaOntario.com for full details. ◆◆Based on Association of International Automobile Manufacturers of Canada (AIAMC) data reflecting sales between 1997 and December 2012. ‡Does not replace the driver's responsibility to exercise due care while driving. ΔText message and e-mail functions are only compatible with certain devices.

With accessories approved your Lucerne won't let you down

Second Gear.
2006-2010
Buick Lucerne

JUSTIN PRITCHARD
Drive@metronews.ca

HANDOUT

From 2006 to 2010, the Lucerne topped Buick's model range as an attainable luxury sedan with a whisper-quiet ride, front-wheel drive confidence and available V8 power. In the used market, Lucerne is a cost-effective way to access a taste of the motoring high-life — American style.

Feature content includes leather seating, OnStar, automatic lights, automatic climate control and plenty more. Expect plenty of room for four or five adults and a generous trunk.

Common Issues

A thorough check of all accessories is a must, and shoppers should pay extra attention to the climate control system, air conditioner, OnStar system and stereo. Listen for and identify any clunking or "popping" sounds from the suspension and steering on your test drive, which could indicate a worn-out component. The long-lived and robust 3.8 litre V6 engine had been in GM's powertrain lineup for decades, and it amounts to a solid performer. Unless you're a speed freak, this engine is an advisable bet since it's largely proven itself to be mechanically bulletproof albeit for some issues caused by leaky gaskets.

Have the Lucerne you're considering checked for signs of this problem by a GM mechanic.

Check for signs of moisture or water damage in the trunk, ensure the keyless entry system works as expected and have the underside of the 4.6 litre V8, if equipped, checked for signs of oil leakage.

Engine

A 3.8 litre V6 generated around 200 horsepower, while a 3.9 litre, 227-horsepwoer V6 was available. A 4.6 litre Northstar V8 engine could be specified, putting 275 or 292 horsepower on tap depending on the year.

What owners like

Ride quality, comfort, noise levels and an overall luxurious, relaxing experience are reported by most owners. Performance is considered more than adequate, especially with the V8.

What owners dislike

Somewhat hefty fuel consumption and a "soft" suspension, which limits the Lucerne's fun-to-drive factor, are among the most common complaints.

Verdict

Opt for as new a model as your budget will allow — sticking with the 3.8 litre engine where possible. A lower-mileage unit with factory warranty remaining will add further confidence.

You better check the car before you buy a wreck of a car

Once you've found the car that you think is "the one," it's tempting to rush through the buying process so you can get into the driver's seat as soon as possible. But before you fully commit, there's one more important step you need to make and that's to take the car for a pre-purchase inspection (PPI).

What is a PPI?

This thorough inspection is performed by a qualified and licensed mechanic who will determine the cosmetic, mechanical and safety condition of the car.

The technician will examine the exterior of the car, the interior, under the hood and the undercarriage and they'll pinpoint any existing conditions as well as highlight potential issues that could arise in the future.

By learning more about what's happening underneath the hood, you'll either feel more confident that you're making a great investment or you'll discover that there are a few hidden conditions that could give you more leverage with price negotiations.

When you take the vehicle for a PPI, it's always a great idea to bring along the vehicle history report, purchased through companies like CarProof. The mechanic can view the report and confirm that any prior accident or damage that's occurred during the vehicle's lifetime has been properly repaired.

Why PPI?

They'll pinpoint any existing conditions as well as highlight potential issues that could arise in the future

Where can I get one?

If you're buying a car from a dealer, many dealerships can conduct the PPI on-site. They should also be open to you taking the vehicle for an inspection by an independent mechanic. As a consumer, it's your right, and a non-binding offer to purchase and a refundable deposit are usually considered acceptable pre-conditions to an inspection.

If you're getting the inspection done off-site or dealing with a private seller then you'll want to take the vehicle to a mechanic that you have a great relationship with. If you don't have a go-to service centre, you can ask friends and family for recommendations.

A pre-purchase inspection is the final step to making sure the car you're considering is the right vehicle for you. By arming yourself with information from a CarProof report and a PPI, you can be confident about the history of the vehicle, as well as its current state. NEWS CANADA

A pre-purchase inspection by a qualified mechanic will let you know if you're buying a great investment or a lemon. NEWS CANADA

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GM says the Corvette 2014 Stingray "redefines modern performance." ALL PHOTOS HANDOUT

Corvette 2014 Stingray a hot ride, but who will actually buy?

Dream Car. GM hopes to attract wealthy boomers who want a good looking car at a lower price than European models

TODD BURLAGE
wheelbasemedia.com

Bob Trowbridge considered himself about the luckiest man in Michigan as he made the easy half-hour drive east from Lavonia to the Cobo Center in downtown Detroit.

The 51-year-old father of three wasn't in the market to buy the new 2014 Corvette Stingray. But sure as horsepower, Trowbridge wasn't going to miss a perfect chance for a photo with the star of the North American International Auto Show.

"Us gear heads, we have waited a long time for this car," said Trowbridge, a regular at the show. "We've heard (the new Corvette) was coming for years now. It's finally here, and it really is a beautiful car."

With a Torch Red full-size Stingray hanging from the wall above, and the Cyber Grey car rotating 360 degrees on a circular stage below, Chevrolet spared no expense to celebrate the 60th birthday and a new seventh generation of this iconic American ride.

Nearly 800,000 folks stopped by for two straight weeks to marvel at a vehicle few will own, but all had to see.

"It's not the most practical car, not exactly great for little league parents," Trowbridge quipped. "But everybody here would sure love to have one."

The Corvette's new 6.3-litre V8 engine delivers an estimated 450 horsepower that propels the car to 60 m.p.h. (96 km/h) from a standing start in less than four seconds, yet still provides good fuel economy. Part of that comes from direct fuel injection that can severely taper the fuel load under cruising conditions, while a new seven-speed manual transmission keeps the engine in its ideal rev range more of the time.

"The 2014 Corvette redefines modern performance," said Mary Barra, GM senior vice-president of product development. "This is everyone's vehicle."

All of which sounds great in theory, but who is going to buy the new Corvette when it goes on sale? And was the two-week buzz swirling the Cobo Center stage a sign of future sales, or just consumer curiosity?

GM has yet to release any sales projections for its headliner, but USA Today and other industry analysts report that 30,000 would be a satisfying first-year sales figure for the Stingray, and a 54 per cent increase from 2012 when anticipation for the new-gen model helped drop Corvette sales 14,000. For comparison sake, GM sells about 30,000 full-size Silverado and Sierra pickups every three weeks in the United States.

It could be a case where sales really don't tell the whole story. GM North American president Mark Reuss said that developing and launching the Stingray under misty market projections is a feather in GM's cap.

"Through good times and bad, there's always been a Corvette."

TODD BURLAGE IS A FEATURE WRITER WITH WHEELBASE MEDIA. HE CAN BE REACHED ON THE WEB AT WHEELBASEMEDIA.COM BY CLICKING THE CONTACT LINK. WHEELBASE SUPPLIES AUTOMOTIVE NEWS AND FEATURES TO NEWSPAPERS ACROSS NORTH AMERICA.

Fun over lean and green

In an automotive climate that's focused on simple, green and affordable, Chevy is betting millions that this new Corvette is much more than a mid-life-crisis option for younger baby boomers and older gen Xers

- With a new aluminum frame, updated chassis and a far more refined look inside and out, GM hopes to buck some eco consciousness, and deliver a "hobby" vehicle that performs right alongside high-speed heavyweights such as Porsche and Ferrari, at about half the price or, in some cases, considerably less.
- Only time and performance will show if a new Corvette with an old nameplate creates any vibe with a young demographic that's placing a decreasing emphasis on owning a car at all.

The original Sting Ray (two words) arrived for the 1963 model year.

Even with an estimated base price of $65,000, the new Corvette fits budgets better than any top European makes.

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Toronto Auto Show. ELR to join Volt and Karma in Extended Range Electric Vehicle territory

AUTO PILOT
Mike Goetz
drive@metronews.ca

The 2014 Cadillac ELR is focusing on making the driver look good. HANDOUT

The 2014 Cadillac ELR is one of the cooler-looking brand-new production cars taking the stage at this week's auto show in Toronto.

It also makes GM a pioneer of sorts. Not like the folks on Little House on the Prairie, looking for really nice farming dirt. More like Thomas Edison, looking for new things that can be powered by electricity.

The Cadillac ELR is slated to start production late this year for an early 2014 on-sale date. That's when we'll find out if luxury buyers, already willing to pay a premium for a luxury ride and all it entails, are also willing to pay a bit extra for an electric powertrain.

Technically the ELR is not a pure electric vehicle. Like the Chevrolet Volt, it has an electric motor and an internal combustion engine, the latter used primarily for re-charging the ELR's battery so the vehicle is always "electrically" driven. You can also recharge it by plugging it in. Officially, GM calls it an Extended Range Electric Vehicle.

The only other extended range electric vehicles currently on the market would be the $42,000 Chevrolet Volt and the $100,000-plus Fisker Karma. A little too conveniently, all GM would say about ELR's projected price is that it would be more than Volt, less than Karma.

Cadillac is figuring, like Fisker and some others, that electricity is high-tech and desirable. But the styling of the ELR screams non-electric. You could very easily imagine it to be powered by something like a high-output V6.

The ELR is longer than the Cadillac ATS, but only offers the part-time rear seating area of a 2+2. The focus is clearly on the driver and making him or her feel good and look good.

While it has the same 1.4-litre "four" as Volt, and the same battery and electric motor set-up, it has slightly more power, due to new "battery discharge" software programming learned from Volt's first years on the road.

Handling should be several degrees better than Volt, due to a more advanced chassis, featuring 20-inch tires, a wide track, many aluminum pieces and a Watts Z-link rear suspension.

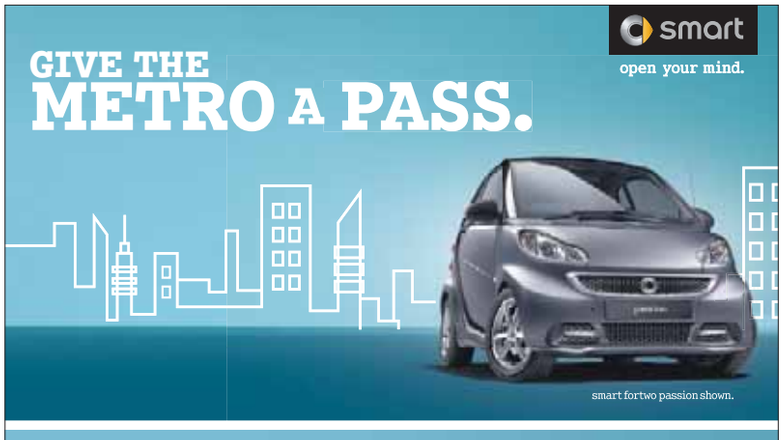
Among the many new and novel bits to ELR is Regen on Demand. When you need to slow down or come to a stop, you could use your brake pedal as usual, or you could engage Regen on Demand via paddle levers on the steering wheel. The experience is not unlike downshifting early on a manual transmission car. It's basic regenerative braking, as happens in all hybrid and EVs, but in Regen on Demand mode it does it with a lot more feeling, and a lot more electricity going back into the battery. Also neat is the system that allows drivers to select four driving modes: Sport — let's boogie; Tour — default setting; Mountain — gas engine actually provides some assistance to the electric motor; Hold — keeps your battery charge for when it might be more useful and efficient, like when you get to stop-and-go city traffic after a long commute.

It will be fun over the next few years, watching electric powertrains migrate to luxury segments, with more opportunity for styling and engineering advancements and experimentation. Let the pioneering games begin.

Details

Bullet Pointing the ELR:

- **EV range.** 56 km
- **EV plus gas range.** 480 km
- **Torque.** 298 lb-ft
- **Top speed.** 160 km/h
- **Looks.** Killer



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Whether it's a birthday gift for a friend or loved one or just something for yourself, here are some ideas for unique automotive-inspired presents.

WHEELBASE MEDIA

Time for work

Since we spend so much time there, office accessories can make really cool gifts, especially if the person sitting behind the desk happens to be an automotive aficionado. British accessory specialists Me and My Car makes this unique Rev Counter Desk Clock. The tachometer-style face is based on the MKII version of the Jaguar XKE, except that it includes both hour and minute hands in addition to a separate sweep-second dial at the "six" position. The quartz movement is battery powered and the clock fits inside a classy polished-aluminum base. Note that the reseller offers worldwide shipping, so get the Rev Counter Desk Clock for US $60 from notonthehighstreet.com.

Stick to it

The Stick-n-find is a real boon for those of us who are constantly misplacing car keys. The product consists of a button-sized Bluetooth-enabled device with a sticky back that attaches to anything, or even anyone. The radar screen-style app that you download to your iPhone, or similar device, Will track your item's whereabouts up to 30 metres away. You can also use the app to make the Stick-n-find buzz, flash its built-in light, or both, which is great to find your stuff in the dark. And it will also alert you through the app's "virtual leash" feature if the item, pet or person begins to move beyond a designated range. The product uses a standard watch battery that is good for about a year. A three-pack of Stick-n-finds sells for US $70 and can be purchased at sticknfind.com.

A new/old Shelby

Retrobuilt Motors of Lamar, Mo., is in the business of producing officially licensed, re-bodied, late-model (2005 and newer) Mustang coupes and convertibles that appear surprisingly similar to the 1969 Shelby GT500 models. All body panels are made of fiberglass, to which Retrobuilt adds authentic-looking metal bumpers and rear window louvers plus original-style mirrors, side marker lights, wheels and GT500 decals. Finally, the grille is finished using stainless-steel trim. Buyers can add the optional racing package that includes a supercharger, lowered ride height and bigger brakes. Prices start at US $32,000, not including the donor car of your choosing. Details can be found at retrobuilt.com.

Are you receiving me?

For anyone who prefers to always travel prepared, a two-way radio could be a critical lifeline in case of an emergency. The Midland XT511 Emergency Crank Base Camp will keep you connected to the outside world with its built-in AM/FM radio and can summon help with its built-in 22-channel two-way radio (licence required) with scan feature. The XT511 uses a rechargeable battery pack that can be revived using a plug-in socket or with the attached hand crank. The US $90 price includes a hand-held microphone, AC wall adapter and shoulder strap. Check out it and other Midland products at midlandusa.com.

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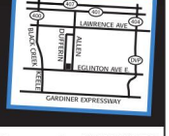
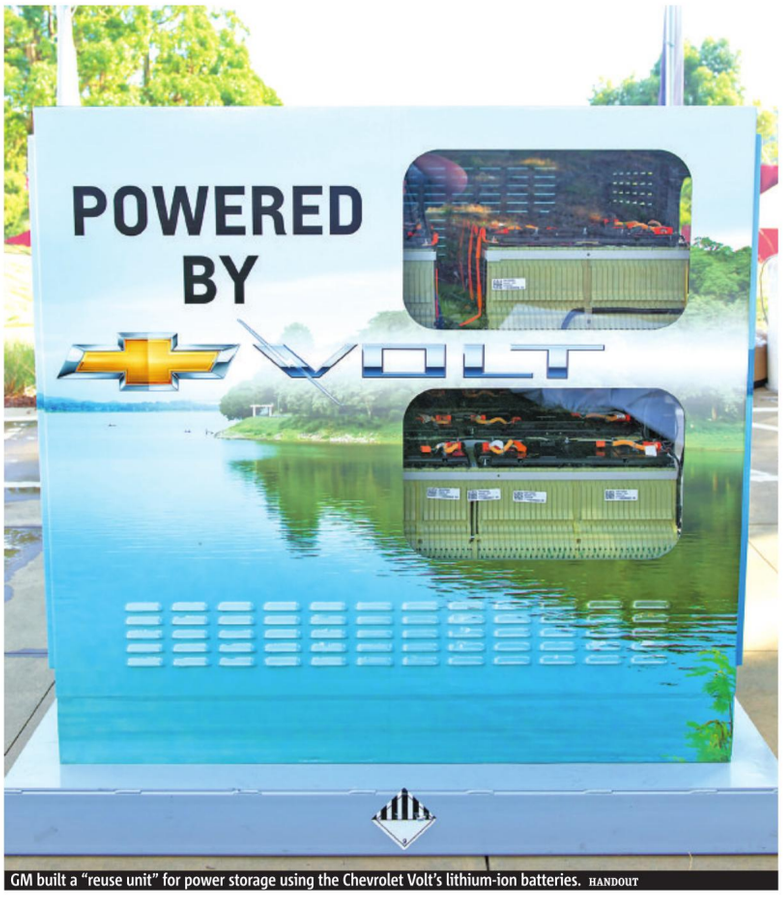


Disclosure:†Offer available on retail leases of new 2013 Mazda3 GX (D4XS53AA00)// 2013 Mazda 3 Sport Hatchback GX //2014 CX-5(NVXK64AA00)// 2014 Mazda 6 GX (G4XL64AA00) with a lease APR of 2.49%//2.49% //4.99%//4.99% and monthly payments of $169// $179 //$269//$378// for 48 months //48 months //36 months//48 months, the total lease obligation is $8,716// $9,196//$13,693//$18,144, including down payment of $595//$595//$3,995//$0. Lease payments include freight and P.D.E. of $1,695//$1,695//$1,895//$1,895. 20,000 km per year mileage allowance applies; if exceeded, additional 8¢ per km applies (12¢ per km for CX-9 models). Offers exclude HST. Offered leasing available to retail customers only. OFFERS END FEBRUARY 28th, 2013, VISIT YORKDALEDUFFERINMAZDA.CA FOR MORE DETAILS.



GM built a "reuse unit" for power storage using the Chevrolet Volt's lithium-ion batteries. HANDOUT

'Second life' coming

Driving Force. Discarded electric car batteries may one day power homes and commercial spaces

JIL MCINTOSH
drive@metronews.ca

Electric vehicles may point the way toward the future of mobility, but they're not without their issues. One of these is what to do with their batteries when the car is finally at the end of its life.

Several companies are working on solutions, including General Motors, which has demonstrated a "reuse unit" for power storage using the Chevrolet Volt's lithium-ion batteries.

"This is a secondary-use application and it's one of the ways we're looking into extending the battery's useful life," says Peter Karlson, engineering specialist for General Motors of Canada.

Although the unit was demonstrated in California, it was built at GM's research and development centre in Oshawa, Ont.

The average lifespan of any car is around 10 years, but at that point, the Volt's battery is expected to still have about 70 per cent of its capacity intact. Rather than send the batteries for recycling with that much left in them, researchers are putting them into units that will store electricity, whether from the power grid, solar or wind power, and then make it available during power outages or expensive peak hours.

The GM prototype was demonstrated by running lights and equipment in an off-grid structure, with all of the power coming from the Volt batteries inside of it. The company says the power produced was the equivalent needed to run three to five average homes for two hours. Researchers are now working on installing the system on the electrical grid, where they will monitor "smart grid" applications where the unit can be integrated to store and supply power for homes and commercial use.

"This particular unit we're working on is more targeted to the utility companies, allowing them to deliver power at higher quality and at lower cost to their customers," Karlson says. "From the onset of the Volt, people have been concerned about what will happen with all of these batteries. They won't go to landfills and we're delaying their recycling."

The company says it doesn't expect electric car batteries to start being returned for at least a decade, but is working proactively to have solutions in place once they do.

The future of lithium

Recycling lithium is currently far more expensive than mining it

- Numerous companies are working on solutions to bring down the price, so that batteries can be effectively recycled following secondary uses.
- Electric car batteries may one day be used in individual storage units, installed in houses to store power from on-site solar panels.

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The Toyota Prius Plug-In comes with extra fuel savings

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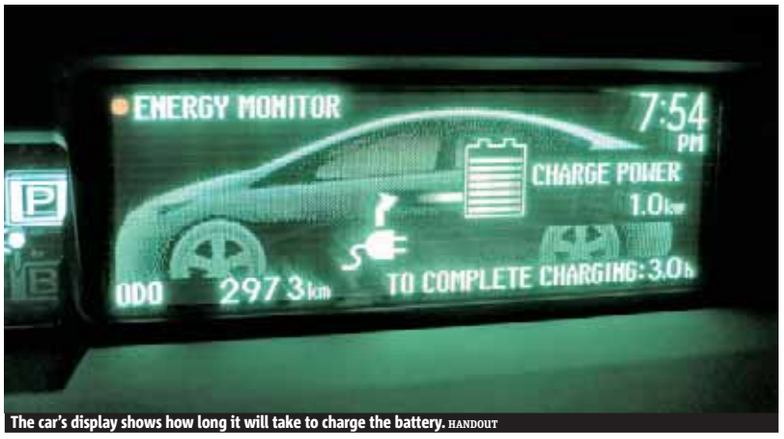
JIL MCINTOSH
drive@metronews.ca



The car's display shows how long it will take to charge the battery. HANDOUT

The Toyota Prius Plug-In charges from a wall outlet. HANDOUT

You've likely seen owners of hybrid vehicles filling up their gas tanks at the station. But now there's a new version, the Toyota Prius Plug-In, which takes gas through its filler on one side, but which plugs into a household wall outlet on the other.

"Our initial goal with hybrids was to make them as easy to adopt as possible," says John-Paul Farag, manager of advanced technology and powertrain at Toyota Canada.

"We didn't want people to have to drive or maintain it differently."

The conventional Prius hybrid uses a gasoline engine and electric motor for propulsion, running on one or the other, or a combination of both, depending on such factors as speed, acceleration, and ambient temperature.

It doesn't need to be plugged in, because the battery recharges itself during braking or from the gasoline engine.

When the Prius Plug-In is plugged in, its battery recharges so it can provide up to about 25 kilometres on electricity alone, at speeds up to 100 km/h. Once that stored charge is depleted, the car reverts to normal hybrid operation.

An "electric vehicle" button on the console allows the driver to determine when the car will run on the stored charge. Someone who gets on the highway right away, for example, might opt to run the car on hybrid mode, and then switch to electricity once she's off the highway and driving at lower speeds.

"It takes three hours to recharge on a regular household outlet," Farag says.

"On average off-peak hours, it would be about a penny a kilometre for electricity, which is about one-tenth the cost on gasoline."

The all-electric range may seem short, but it's part of balancing price and performance. To get more electric range, the battery would have to be larger, which would cost more and take longer to charge. It would also be heavier, which in turn would affect the range, since it takes more power to move a car that weighs more.

"It's enough power to commute most of the way on electricity, but on long distances they'll still have the advantage of a hybrid," Farag says.

Unlike with a fully electric vehicle, which stops running when its battery depletes, the Prius Plug-In will continue to operate on gasoline and electricity once its stored charge runs out.

Additional information

- The Prius Plug-In does cost more than a regular Prius, and drivers will have to examine their driving habits to see if it's worth it to them.
- Because of its electric-only ability, the Prius Plug-In is eligible for government environmental rebates in Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia and Prince Edward Island.
- Statistics Canada estimates that 80 per cent of Canadians commute 25 kilometres or less per day.

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Detective Epicene's Clue-of-the-Day: "The Aum Shinrikyo cult released five bags of liquid sarin gas on the Toyko Subway using sharpened umbrellas."

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♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
What happens today will take you by surprise, most likely because you have been fearing the worst. Could it be you were too negative in your evaluation of the situation? Of course. But now you know better.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Make sure you keep an eye on what partners and loved ones and work colleagues are up to today. Above all, don't let them sign you up for anything you are not 100 per cent convinced is good for you.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Each sign is born with its own special talent and yours is your ability to sense what other people are feeling. Use that talent today to find out why someone you love feels under the weather then cheer them up.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
You can do no wrong at the moment, but that does not mean you have permission to do what you know is very wrong indeed! Yes, you can push the envelope, a little, but don't push your luck too far.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Lay down the law and make sure everyone you have dealings with knows what is expected of them. Things have been a bit sloppy of late, so get your act together and make sure those around you do likewise.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
There may be some major upheavals today but the Sun in Aquarius has you covered, so you don't have to worry too much. Other people may be a bit negative though, so watch out for harmful emotions.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
If there is a social or career opportunity you would like to take advantage of then go for it — now, this very moment. The longer you sit there thinking about it, the more likely it is you'll miss out.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You can go anywhere. You can do anything. You are the master of your own destiny in every conceivable way. You find that hard to believe? Well, start believing it because it's absolutely true. Never doubt yourself.

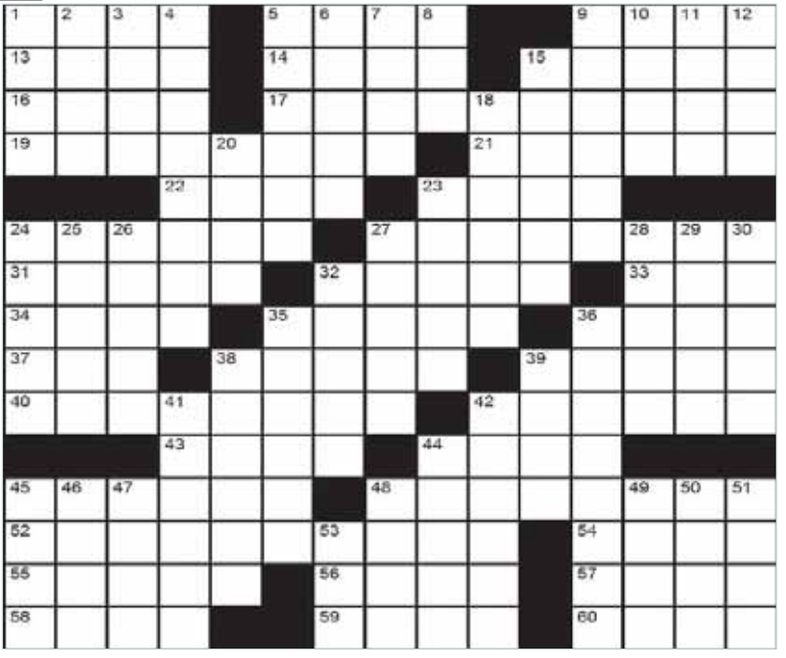
♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You need to go on the offensive today. You need to make sure your rivals understand that you will not just stand there and take what they choose to give you. You're the one with the talent, so you do the choosing.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You know instinctively when other people are lying to you, and that ability will come in handy over the next 24 hours. You don't have to let them know you are on to them though, at least not yet.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Someone in authority seems to be asking a lot of you at the moment but there is a good reason for it, and an even better reason why you should play along. Maybe they are testing you for future promotion! SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

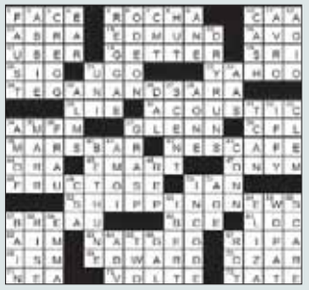
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. __ wash jeans
5. Slang for coffee
9. Comprehend
13. Memo
14. Adam and Eve's grandson
15. Spring flower
16. "_ __ Rock and Roll Music" by Peter, Paul and Mary
17. Canadian activist whose achievements include the Man In Motion World Tour: 2 wds.
19. Our national summer sport
21. Canadian filmmaker Atom
22. Pulitzer-winning writer James
23. Highbrow
24. Toronto concert venue, __ Hall
27. Canadian rap star, __ Offishall
31. Surface
32. "etalk" anchor Ms. Kim
33. Ginger __
34. Cooper car
35. Makes text thicker-looking
36. Take part
37. Ms. Ryan
38. Austin's state
39. Was angry
40. Margaret Atwood bestseller, The Blind __
42. "Beyond the Sea" singer Bobby, and others
43. Shabby __ (Interior design style)
44. Greek cheese
45. Tranquil
48. "__ Development"
52. Yes or No voting event in Quebec in 1980 and 1995
54. Positive
55. Apprehensive feeling
56. Crossword rendering of a bear's scratch-on-a-tree
57. Nile wader
58. __ Scale
59. Musical based on the work of T.S. Eliot
60. Wine holder

Down
1. Indigo dye source
2. Finale, in music
3. Suffix to 'Arthr'
4. Teen drama TV series
5. Football player's numbered top
6. Fennel-like flavour
7. Viva __ (Word-of-mouth)
8. Inquire
9. Obi-Wan __
10. Meddlesome [var. sp.]
11. Vitamins brand, __ _ Day
12. Las Vegas resorts mogul, Steve __
15. Tiered temple
18. Mr. Fonda's
20. S-shaped moulding
23. Alberta's Oil __
24. ABBA musical, __ Mia!
25. Ram's sign
26. Performs a tune
27. "Canadian Idol" Season 2 winner Mr. Porter
28. Ms. Campbell
29. 1979 Sigourney Weaver sci-fi movie
30. Loans
32. Britney Spears hit
35. Next to
36. "__ Park" (1993)
38. Vacation souvenir to wear
39. Destiny
41. Showbiz news show, "__ Hollywood"
42. Skin layer
44. Kiwi __
45. Stroller, in Britain
46. Letterman's rival
47. Kabul, __.
48. 1998 Sarah McLachlan hit
49. Marching band instrument
50. Greek goddess of discord
51. Office table
53. Ms. Kidman, to pals

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

6		9				5		
	1	3		4	9	2		
	7		2		5		1	
1	9		3				6	
			9	7	6			
	8				4		2	9
	6		4		7		5	
		5	8	1		6	9	
		8				1		2

Yesterday's Sudoku

9	8	1	6	4	7	3	5	2
4	2	3	8	1	5	6	7	9
6	7	5	9	2	3	1	8	4
8	3	6	2	5	4	9	1	7
1	5	9	3	7	8	4	2	6
2	4	7	1	9	6	8	3	5
5	6	8	4	3	2	7	9	1
3	9	2	7	6	1	5	4	8
7	1	4	5	8	9	2	6	3

kia.ca

OFFER ENDS FEBRUARY 28TH

PAY 90 DAYS∞

0% — FINANCING ON — 2013** — SELECT MODELS —

DRIVE IN WINTER, PAY IN SPRING.

Sportage SX shown△

Sorento SX shown^

Sedona EX Luxury shown△

2013 SPORTAGE

HWY (A/T): 6.5L/100KM
CITY (A/T): 9.7L/100KM

AVAILABLE ALL-WHEEL DRIVE

LEASE IT FROM **$272**§ PER MONTH

AT **1.9%** APR

FOR UP TO **48** MONTHS

HEATED SEATS | ELECTRONIC STABILITY CONTROL

Offer includes delivery, destination and fees of $2,183 and **$500 LEASE SAVINGS.** $3,000 down payment required. **BASED ON A PURCHASE PRICE OF $26,878.** Offer based on 2013 Sportage 2.4L LX AT FWD.

2013 SORENTO

HWY (A/T): 6.5L/100KM
CITY (A/T): 9.8L/100KM

7 PASSENGER SEATING AVAILABLE

AVAILABLE ALL-WHEEL DRIVE

3 MONTHLY PAYMENTS ON US~ ON SORENTO ONLY

OWN IT FROM **$159**≠ BI-WEEKLY WITH **$0** DOWN

AT **1.49%** APR FOR UP TO **60** MONTHS

HEATED SEATS | HEATED SIDE-VIEW MIRRORS | ELECTRONIC STABILITY CONTROL

bi-weekly for 60 months, amortized over 84 months with **$0 DOWN PAYMENT.** $8,131 remaining balance. Offer includes delivery, destination and fees of $2,183 and **$1,650 "3 PAYMENTS ON US" SAVINGS¥. BASED ON A PURCHASE PRICE OF $29,078.** Offer based on 2013 Sorento LX AT FWD.

2012 SEDONA

HWY (A/T): 8.0L/100KM
CITY (A/T): 11.5L/100KM

7 PASSENGER SEATING AVAILABLE

NOW ONLY **$21,478**‘

INCLUDES **$8,700** IN CASH SAVINGS†

STEERING WHEEL AUDIO CONTROL | HEATED SIDE-VIEW MIRRORS

Offer includes fees of $533, **$7,050 CASH SAVINGS†** and **$1,650 NO CHARGE DELIVERY & DESTINATION†. BASED ON A PURCHASE PRICE OF $28,528.** Offer based on 2012 Sedona LX.

5 Year Warranty*

WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED
*5-year/100,000 km worry-free comprehensive warranty.

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KIA ENTERS THE TOP 100 GLOBAL BRANDS. Best Global Brands 2012 Interbrand

Proud Partner madd Saving Lives, Supporting Victims

GTA KIA .ca

KIA
The Power to Surprise

Kia's new Customer Friendly Pricing includes delivery and destination fees and government fees. Prices do not include licensing or applicable taxes.

Offer(s) available on select new 2013 models through participating dealers to qualified retail customers who take delivery by February 28, 2013. Dealers may sell or lease for less. Some conditions apply. See dealer for complete details. Vehicles shown may include optional accessories and upgrades available at extra cost. All offers are subject to change without notice. All pricing includes delivery and destination fees up to $1,650, $34 tire recycling/filter charges, $5 OMVIC fee, environmental fee and $100 A/C charge (where applicable) and excludes licensing, registration, insurance, other taxes, variable dealer administration fees (up to $399) and down payment (if applicable and unless otherwise specified). Other lease and financing options also available. **0% purchase financing is available on select new 2013 Kia models O.A.C. Terms vary by model and trim, see dealer for complete details. Representative financing example based on 2013 Sorento LX+AT (SR75BD) with a selling price of $29,078, financed at 0% APR for 60 months. †30 bi-weekly payments equal $224 per payment with a down payment/equivalent trade of $0. ‡3 Payments On Us offer is available on approved credit to eligible retail customers who finance or lease any new 2013 Sorento from a participating dealer between February 1–28, 2013. Customers will receive a cheque in the amount of three payments (excluding taxes) to a maximum of $550 per month or can choose up to $1,650 reductions from the selling/lease price after taxes. See your dealer for complete details. Cannot be combined with "Don't Pay For 90 Days" offer. ∞"Don't Pay For 90 Days" offer (90-day payment deferral) applies to purchase financing on select new 2012/2013 models. No interest will accrue during the first 60 days of the finance contract. After 90 days, interest accrues and the purchaser will repay both the principal and interest monthly over the contract's term. ≠Bi-weekly finance payment O.A.C for new 2013 Sorento LX AT FWD (SR75BD) based on a selling price of $29,078 is $159 with an APR of 1.49% for 60 months, amortized over an 84-month period with a $0 down payment or equivalent trade. Estimated remaining principal balance of $8,131 plus applicable taxes due at end of 60-month period. Retailer may sell for less. See dealer for full details. §Lease offer available on approved credit on new 2013 Sportage 2.4L LX AT FWD (SP752D) is based on monthly payments of $272 [includes lease savings (lease credit) of $500] for 48 months at 1.9% with a $3,000 down payment/equivalent trade, security deposit and first monthly payment due at lease inception. Total lease obligation is $16,830 with the option to purchase at the end of the term for $10,048. Lease has 16,000 km/year allowance and $0.12/km for excess kilometres (other packages available). License, insurance, applicable taxes and registration fees are extra. Retailer may lease for less. See dealer for full details. ‘Cash purchase price for 2012 Sedona LX (SD75IC) is $21,478 and includes a cash savings of $8,700 (which is deducted from the negotiated selling price before taxes and cannot be combined with special lease and finance offers). Retailer may sell for less. †$8,700 cash savings on the cash purchase of an eligible new 2012 Sedona LX (SD75IC) from a participating dealer between February 1–28, 2013, are deducted from the selling price before taxes and cannot be combined with special lease and finance offers. Cash savings on Sedona includes $1,650 in delivery & destination fees. Some conditions apply. ^Model shown Manufacturer Suggested Retail Price for 2013 Sorento 3.5L SX AWD 7-seater (SR75XD)/2013 Sportage 2.0T SX with Navigation (SP759D)/2012 Sedona EX Luxury with Navigation (SD75DC) is $43,045/$39,145/$42,745 and includes delivery and destination fees of $1,650, environmental fee and A/C charge ($100, where applicable). License, insurance, applicable taxes, variable dealer administration fees (up to $399), tire recycling and filter charges of $34, OMVIC fee and registration fees are extra. Retailer may sell for less. See dealer for full details. Available at participating dealers. ^ Highway/city fuel consumption is based on the 2013 Sorento 2.4L GDI 4-cyl (A/T)/2013 Sportage 2.4L MPI 4-cyl (A/T)/2012 Sedona 3.5L MPI V6 (A/T). These updated estimates are based on the Government of Canada's approved criteria and testing methods. Refer to the *EnerGuide Fuel Consumption Guide*. Your actual fuel consumption will vary based on driving habits and other factors. Information in this advertisement is believed to be accurate at the time of printing. For more information on our 5-year warranty coverage, visit kia.ca or call us at 1-877-542-2886. KIA is a trademark of Kia Motors Corporation.